

WHO WERE THE PHARISEES AGAIN?  
A HIDDEN POLEMIC AGAINST THE JEWISH DISCIPLES IN MARK 7:1–23

A Dissertation  
presented to  
the Faculty of the  
Claremont School of Theology

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

by  
Sung Hwan Lee

March 2019

Copyright © 2019 by Sung Hwan Lee

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

The dissertation completed by

**Sung Hwan Lee**

has been presented to  
the faculty of Claremont of Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**Faculty Committee**

Committee Chairperson    Gregory J. Riley

Committee Member        Thomas E. Phillips

Committee Member        Jon L. Berquist

**Dean of the Faculty**

Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook

March 2019

## ABSTRACT

### WHO WERE THE PHARISEES AGAIN? A HIDDEN POLEMIC AGAINST THE JEWISH CHRISTIANS IN MARK 7:1–23

By

Sung Hwan Lee

Claremont School of Theology

My thesis is that in Mark 7:1–23 the character of the Pharisees have been employed as a caricature as a way of criticizing the Jewish-Christian Judaizers that belonged to the Jerusalem Church. Considering that Mark seems to have written for a gentile community who did not have a meaningful conflict or interaction with the historical Pharisees as a group, creating a polemic against the historical Pharisees seems irrelevant to the reality of Mark's audience. I propose that a *Sitz im Leben* similar to that of Gal 2:11–16 is behind the scene of Mark 7:1–23, in which a gentile-Christian community has been required by some representatives of the Jerusalem Church to keep Jewish food laws. The polemic against this group that claimed to represent the Jerusalem community needed to be hidden due to the unequal power relationship between Mark's gentile audience as subordinate and the Jerusalem Church as dominant.

Mark's polemic directed against the Jewish sects centered around the temple is ultimately redirected against the Twelve disciples who Mark seems to regard to represent the Jerusalem Church. Peter, who represents the Twelve, is reported to have misunderstood Jesus and denied Jesus. This rather consistent polemic against the Twelve

in Mark supports my thesis that it was not the Pharisees that Mark denigrates but the Jewish-Christian Judaizers who belonged to the Jerusalem community that the Twelve represented. There are certain signals that reveal the hidden polemic in the text of Mark 7:1–23 in its intertextual relation with Gal 2:11–16, and they are revealed more clearly through a rhetorical-critical analysis. Based on a few other cases of Mark's attempt to narrativize Pauline ideas, I suggest that Mark relies on Pauline tradition in refuting his Jewish-Christian opponents. A set of Mark's polemical points against Mark's supposed Jewish-Christian opponents coincide with the characters of a sub-group of the early church in Jerusalem and also with those of the Ebionites, thus providing some clues concerning their identity.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My *Doktorvater*, Dr. Gregory J. Riley, did not give up on me and kept encouraging me to try my best. As a greatest role model that a biblical student could ever wish for, Dr. Riley showed me how to work hard and honestly as a biblical scholar, not to mention that his works, especially the *Resurrection Reconsidered*, inspired me to come up with ideas regarding my thesis. Dr. Thomas E. Phillips welcomed my thesis idea and instructed me to further investigate on the relationship between the Petrine Christianity and the Pauline Christianity, which gave me a lot of clues on how to develop the logic of my dissertation. Dr. Jon L. Berquist's class inspired me to ponder upon the postcolonial aspect of the relationship between the early church and a gentile-Christian community, which became an important component of this dissertation. I thank all three members of my dissertation committee for their sincere guidance.

I flew alone to the U.S. in Fall 2009 to embark on an academic journey, which I had never thought would take this long. My wife Ja Hyun Kim has believed in me and loved me during the ten years of this tiring phase of our life together, and I thank God for her. I thank my son for having grown to be so beautiful even though I had not been able to spend enough time with him. From now on, I might be able to spend more time with him. I cannot thank enough to my parents for their guidance and support. They always rooted for me, believing that their son would someday be great. I am so blessed to be their son.

Lastly, I thank God for letting me survive this training. This training was not merely about nurturing my intellect, but was about my spiritual growth. As I was struggling over the course of this program, my soul became more closely synced with truth. Overall, I became a better person thanks to this plan once unknown to me but now partly revealed to me. After all, *πάθει μάθος*.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<i>Adv. haer.</i>	<i>Adversus haereses (Against Heresies)</i>
<i>Adv. omn. haer.</i>	<i>Adversus omnes haereses (Against All Heresies)</i>
<i>A.J.</i>	<i>Antiquitates judaicae (Jewish Antiquities)</i>
<i>Ann.</i>	<i>Annales</i>
<i>Aug.</i>	<i>Divus Augustus</i>
BCE	before the Common Era
<i>B.J.</i>	<i>Bellum judaicum (Jewish War)</i>
<i>Brut.</i>	<i>Brutus</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
ca.	circa
CD	Cairo Genizah copy of the Damascus Document
CE	Common Era
<i>Cels.</i>	<i>Contra Celsum (Against Celsus)</i>
<i>Class. Philol.</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
Comm	Common
<i>Commun. Monogr.</i>	<i>Communication Monographs</i>
Cor	Corinthians
<i>De praescr. haer.</i>	<i>De praescriptione haereticorum (On the Prescription of Heretics)</i>
<i>Dem. ev.</i>	<i>Demonstratio evangelica (Demonstration of the Gospel)</i>
Deu	Deuteronomy
<i>Dial.</i>	<i>Dialogus cum Tryphone (Dialogue with Trypho)</i>
<i>Eloc.</i>	<i>De Elocutione (On Style)</i>
Eph	Ephesians
Esth	Esther



Ezek	Ezekiel
<i>fr.</i>	<i>fragmentum, fragmenta</i>
frag.	fragment
Gal	Galatians
Gen	Genesis
<i>Gos. Thom.</i>	<i>Gospel of Thomas</i>
<i>GTh</i>	<i>Gospel of Thomas</i>
H	Hodayot
<i>Haer.</i>	<i>Adversus haereses (Against Heresies)</i>
<i>Hist.</i>	<i>Historiae (Histories)</i>
<i>Hist. eccl.</i>	<i>Historia ecclesiastica (Ecclesiastical History)</i>
<i>Hist. rom.</i>	<i>Historiae romanae (Roman History)</i>
<i>Il.</i>	<i>Ilias (Iliad)</i>
<i>Inf.</i>	<i>Inferno</i>
<i>Inst.</i>	<i>Institutio oratoria</i>
IQP	International Q project
Isa	Isaiah
<i>J. B. Mormon Stud.</i>	<i>Journal of Book of Mormon Studies</i>
<i>J. RelSoc.</i>	<i>Journal of Religion and Society</i>
<i>JBC</i>	<i>Jerome Biblical Commentary</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>Jdt</i>	<i>Judith</i>
<i>JE</i>	<i>The Jewish Encyclopedia</i>
Jer	Jeremiah
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>

<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>LSJ</i>	Liddel, Henry George, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones. <i>A Greek English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised suppliment. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996
LXX	Septuagint
Matt	Gospel of Matthew
NA <sup>28</sup>	<i>Novum Testamentum Graece, Nestle-Aland, 28th ed.</i>
NIV	New International Version
Num	Numbers
<i>OGIS</i>	<i>Oriens Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae</i> . Edited by Wilhelm Dittenberger. 2 vols. Leipzig: Hirzel, 1903–1905
p	peshet
<i>Pan.</i>	<i>Panarion (Refutation of All Heresies)</i>
pap	papyrus
<i>Phaed.</i>	<i>Phaedo</i>
Phil	Philippians
Ps	Psalms
<i>Od.</i>	<i>Odyssea (Odyssey)</i>
<i>QG</i>	<i>Questiones et solutiones in Genesin (Questions and Answers on Genesis)</i>
<i>Resp.</i>	<i>Respublica (Republic)</i>
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
<i>Rhet.</i>	<i>Rhetorica (Rhetoric)</i>
Rom	Romans
<i>Syracuse Sch.</i>	<i>Syracuse Scholar</i>
Thess	Thessalonians
Tim	Timothy
<i>Tim.</i>	<i>Timaeus</i>

*Vesp.*

*Vespasianus*

*Vit. Caes.*

*Vita Caesaris*

WBC

Word Biblical Commentary

# CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	vi
List of Abbreviation and Acronyms .....	viii
Table of Contents .....	x
1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. The Problem of Mark 7:1–23 and My Thesis .....	1
1.2. Methods.....	14
1.3. Outline.....	15
2 CHAPTER TWO: POLEMICS HIDDEN IN ANCIENT NARRATIVES.....	16
2.1. Introduction.....	16
2.2. Arguing by Telling a Story .....	17
2.3. Why Bother Telling a Story? .....	24
2.4. When Telling a Story Is the Only Way . . . ..	33
2.5. Mark’s Winking at the gentile Audience .....	43
2.6. Conclusion .....	46
CHAPTER THREE: AN OVERVIEW OF MARK.....	48
3.1. Introduction.....	48
3.2. Early Christianity and the Imperial Cult.....	49
3.3. Vespasian and the Gospel of Mark .....	53
3.4. Public Images of Vespasian .....	56
3.5. Vespasian and Mark’s Jesus .....	58
3.6. Polemics against Jewish Groups.....	61
3.7. Chiastic Structure.....	67
3.8. Conclusion .....	87
CHAPTER FOUR: MARK’S GRAND SCHEME AGAINST THE JEWISH DISCIPLES .....	90
4.1. Introduction.....	90
4.2. Q and Markan Redaction .....	90
4.3. Jewish Disciples in Contrast and in Comparison.....	93
4.4. Bartimaeus as a Paradigmatic Figure of Discipleship .....	105
4.5. Pauline Tradition as Mark’s Ideological Platform.....	121
4.6. Conclusion .....	134

CHAPTER FIVE: A RHETORICAL-CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF MARK 7:1–23 IN SEARCH OF A HIDDEN POLEMIC .....	136
5.1. Introduction.....	136
5.2. Is the Purity Logion Authentic to Jesus? .....	137
5.3. What is the <i>Sitz im Leben</i> of Mark 7:1–23? .....	146
5.4. A Hidden Polemic in Mark 7:1–23 .....	151
5.5. An Intertextual Approach .....	157
5.6. A Rhetorical-Critical Analysis.....	160
5.7. Who were these “Pharisees?” .....	178
5.8. Conclusion .....	190
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION .....	193
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	199

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. The Problem of Mark 7:1–23 and My Thesis

My thesis is that the character of the Pharisees in Mark 7:1–23 has been employed as a caricature to criticize the Jewish Christians of the kind closely related to the ones whose hypocrisy caused Paul to rebuke Peter, as reported in Gal 2:11–16. Due to the relationship of unequal power between Mark’s gentile-Christian audience and the Jewish Christians who claimed to represent Jerusalem, Mark had to hide the real target of his polemic by employing the character of the Pharisees. Mark’s audience, whom I suggest to have been in Rome around 70 CE, does not seem to have had any meaningful interaction with the historical Pharisees as a group, whose abode was confined within the Palestinian region both before and after 70 CE. Despite this irrelevance of the character of the Pharisees in relation to the reality of Mark’s audience, because of *hypocrisy*—the point of the polemic and the feature shared by the Jewish Christians and the Pharisees—the character of the Pharisees has been employed, both to hide the polemic from possible censorship and to communicate it to the audience.

My thesis is built on a preliminary assumption that Mark wrote after 70 CE for a gentile-Christian community in Rome. Regarding the evidence for Rome as Mark’s provenance, there are two significant pieces of evidence: a large number of Latinisms at various levels and “the motif of suffering discipleship.”<sup>1</sup> According to Brian J. Incigneri,

---

<sup>1</sup> Adam Winn, *The Purpose of Mark’s Gospel: An Early Christian Response to Roman Imperial Propaganda* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 82.

Mark shows Latinism in certain vocabularies, such as δηνάριον (6:37; 12:15; 14:5), μόδιος (4:21), σπεκουλάτωρ (6:27), λεγεών (5:9, 15), κεντυρίων (15:39, 44, 45), πραιτώριον (15:16), φραγελλώω (15:15), κῆνσος (12:14), and κοδράντης (12:42). Adam Winn argues that “these Greek transcriptions of Latin words [...] betray a western origin (Rome) rather than an eastern origin (Syria/Galilee).”<sup>2</sup> Along with these transcriptions, “the word construction and grammar suggest an environment where Latin was widely used,” which, according to Incigneri, excludes Syria, in which “contact with the language [Latin] at a village level would have been rare and, in cities, its use would largely have been for military, political and administrative purposes, not for everyday use.”<sup>3</sup> Incigneri conclusively suggests Rome as “the most likely place for Latinisms to predominate” because it was the place “where the Latin and Greek languages were closely intermingled as nowhere else” and “the ordinary person was forced to deal with both languages in daily life [at the time of Mark’s writing].”<sup>4</sup> The second piece of internal evidence, according to Adam Winn, is that passages such as 8:34–38 and 13:9–13 seem to reflect the past persecution that took place in Rome in 64 CE., since that persecution by the emperor Nero is “[t]he most well known first-century persecution of Christians.”<sup>5</sup> Adding to these two pieces of internal evidence is a thematic one. As will be shown in chapter

---

<sup>2</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark’s Gospel*, 81.

<sup>3</sup> Brian J. Incigneri, *The Gospel to the Romans: The Setting and Rhetoric of Mark’s Gospel* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 101. For more instances of different levels of Latinism, see A. Winn, *The Purpose of Mark* 80-83

<sup>4</sup> Incigneri, *The Gospel to the Romans: The Setting and Rhetoric of Mark’s Gospel*, 102.

<sup>5</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark’s Gospel*, 82.

three, Mark, through his christological presentation with the characteristics that compete with and triumph over the characteristics of Vespasian, responds to the imperial propaganda of Vespasian, which must have been most intensely promoted in the capital of the empire. This also suggests the date of Mark's writing as after 70 CE. Lastly, non-Jewishness of the target audience is rather clear in Mark's way of describing the Jewish purity custom in 7:1–4. By describing wrongly about "all the Jews" (v. 3), Mark basically excludes Jews (who would be able to check the facts) from his expected audience.

The central point of my thesis is that the real target of Mark 7:1–23 is not the historical Pharisees but the Christian Judaizers among the Jewish Christians (as in Acts 15:5). This point has as its premise that polemicizing against the historical Pharisees was irrelevant to the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark's audience because the two groups never intersected. In order to demonstrate that these two groups did not intersect, with the previous suggestion that Mark's audience was in Rome, the whereabouts of the historical Pharisees in relation to Mark's audience must be clarified by answering following questions: 1) Who were the Pharisees in Jesus's day? 2) Who and where were the Pharisees in Mark's day? 3) Who were the Pharisees in the world of Mark's audience?

I intend to address these important questions by making three relevant points regarding the historical Pharisees. First, as the title of Jacob Neusner's book *From Politics to Piety: The Emergence of Pharisaic Judaism* might indicate,<sup>6</sup> the Pharisees were once politically active but turned into a quietistic religious sect since the days of

---

<sup>6</sup> Jacob Neusner, *From Politics to Piety: The Emergence of Pharisaic Judaism*, 2nd ed. (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2003).



Antipater and his son Herod, perhaps due to Hillel's influence. The peculiar focus on dietary regulations found in the rabbinic material reflects the aftermath of this change. Thus, Mark 7:1–4 can be seen as a fairly accurate description of a major trait of the Pharisees at the time. Second, due to the Pharisees' precautions against the *'am ha-aretz*, their influence over the region of Galilee or Decapolis must have been quite limited. If Jesus and his disciples had any conflict with the Pharisees, it is likely to have happened in Jerusalem or in its vicinity. Third, after 70 CE, the Pharisees moved to Yavneh and their influence as a sect became again confined within Palestine, though further north. It seems that Matthew actually had to deal with the historical Pharisees, since they were both located in northern Israel after 70 CE. This third point suggests that Mark's target audience, who was not within the region of Palestine around 70 CE, would not have had any meaningful interaction with the Pharisees as a group.

We have four sources about the Pharisees: the Dead Sea Scrolls, Josephus, the New Testament, and the later Rabbinic compositions. The oldest among them is the Dead Sea Scrolls, of which “the bulk of the extant material” dates “to the first century BCE,” according to Geza Vermes.<sup>7</sup> James C. Vanderkam argues that those who are referred to as ‘those who seek smooth things’ in the Dead Sea Scrolls (CD 1.14–2.1; 1QH<sup>a</sup> X; 4Q163 [= 4Qpap pIsa<sup>c</sup>] 23 II, 10-12; 4Q177 [= 4QCatena<sup>a</sup>] frag. 9, 4-5; 4Q169 [= 4QpNah]) “are indeed Pharisees.”<sup>8</sup> Vanderkam underlines that 4Q169 “mentions a distinctively horrific

---

<sup>7</sup> Geza Vermes, trans., *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, Revised. (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 14.

<sup>8</sup> Steve Mason et al., *In Quest of the Historical Pharisees* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007), 226.

event” in which Alexander Jannaeus, who reigned Israel from ca. 103 to 76 BCE, executed ‘those who seek smooth things’ by hanging them alive.<sup>9</sup> Vanderkam identifies this event with the event that Josephus records in *B.J.* 1.4.6, in which Alexander Jannaeus is reported to have crucified eight hundred of his Jewish opponents in Jerusalem. Though these passages do not specify the victims as Pharisees, Josephus gives more evidence to their identity as Pharisees. According to Josephus, Alexander on his death bed advised his wife Alexandra to give more power to the Pharisees, mentioning that they “had been badly treated by him” (*A.J.* 12.15.5) and suffered “many injuries” because of him (13.15.5), pointing to the crucifixion of the eight hundred. Vanderkam argues that this deathbed story “supplies the missing link for identifying as Pharisees the eight hundred men whom he [Alexander Jannaeus] had crucified.”<sup>10</sup> This link seems valid and permits one to reconstruct some characteristics of the Pharisees with the “scattered references” to ‘those who seek smooth things’ in the Dead Sea Scrolls.<sup>11</sup> They were a community located in Jerusalem (4Q163 23 II, 10–12), politically active during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus (4Q169). Also, they were a sectarian group that the Qumran community condemned for following the “Scoffer,” instead of the leader of the Qumran community, thus breaking the covenant (*CD* 1.14–2.1), and for interpreting the Torah falsely and exchanging its “teaching and understanding” “for the lips of uncircumcision,

---

<sup>9</sup> Mason et al., *Historical Pharisees*, 228.

<sup>10</sup> Mason et al., *Historical Pharisees*, 232.

<sup>11</sup> Mason et al., *Historical Pharisees*, 227.

and for the foreign tongue of a people without understanding” (1QH<sup>a</sup> X, 13–19 [Vermes]).

Paolo Sacchi, based on his reading of Josephus (*A.J.* 13), judges that the Pharisees “were very active, promoting their laws, for political as well as ideological reasons” around Jerusalem, especially during the reign of Alexandra Salome (76–67 BCE).<sup>12</sup> In the ensuing conflict between the two sons of the late queen, however, the Pharisees seem to have lost their political influence a bit in Jerusalem, because Antipater, the governor of Idumea, relied on “the most powerful of the Jews” (*A.J.* 14.11 [Whiston]) instead of the Pharisees in helping Hyrcanus, the older of the two brothers.<sup>13</sup> As Pompey entered Syria in 64 BCE and sided with Hyrcanus only to take over Jerusalem in 63 CE, he “restored the high priesthood to Hyrcanus, and made him governor of the nation” (*A.J.* 20.244 [Whiston]). As a result, Antipater and his powerful Jewish friends, who were not Pharisees, established their political dominance in the region “up until the rise of Caesar.”<sup>14</sup> The Pharisees, however, as Neusner observes, “drop from the picture after Alexandra Salome,”<sup>15</sup> probably because of this newly risen political power group of Antipater and his friends.

---

<sup>12</sup> Paolo Sacchi, *The History of the Second Temple Period* (London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 265.

<sup>13</sup> Sacchi, *History*, 267–68.

<sup>14</sup> Sacchi, *History*, 269.

<sup>15</sup> Jacob Neusner, “Mr. Sanders’s Pharisees and Mine,” *Bull. Biblic. Res.* 2 (1992): 151.

Neusner argues that behind this change “from a political party to a sect” was Hillel, suggesting that the figure of Hillel “dominates the subsequent rabbinic tradition” because he was “responsible for directing the [Pharisaic] party out of its political concerns and into more passive, quietistic paths.”<sup>16</sup> Neusner finds Hillel’s new direction wise, since “had the Pharisees persisted as a political force, they would have come into conflict with Herod [the Great].”<sup>17</sup> It does not seem, however, that they merely gave up their quest for keeping the identity of the Jewish nation on their own terms and hid themselves away. It might be that they chose a different way to resist, having been frustrated by the overwhelming power of the Roman empire. Neusner underlines the Pharsaic focus on the purity laws found in rabbinic literature, observing that “approximately 67 percent of all legal pericopes [of the rabbinic writings] deal with dietary laws: ritual purity for meals and agricultural rules governing the fitness of food for Pharisaic consumption.”<sup>18</sup> This “Pharisaic intensification of purity laws,” suggests Marcus Borg, “not only flowed out of the quest for holiness, but sought to counter directly the corrosive effects of Roman political control and gentile influence.”<sup>19</sup> Whatever the case is, Mark’s depiction of the Pharisees in 7:1-4 seems to reflect this changed direction of the sect, which must have been manifest when Mark was writing.

---

<sup>16</sup> Neusner, “Sander’s Pharisees and Mine,” 151.

<sup>17</sup> Neusner, “Sander’s Pharisees and Mine,” 151.

<sup>18</sup> Mason et al., *Historical Pharisees*, 299.

<sup>19</sup> Marcus J. Borg, *Conflict, Holiness, and Politics in the Teachings of Jesus* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1998), 74.

And this might explain Mark's claimed familiarity with the characteristics of the Pharisees.

Regarding the second point, Sacchi conjectures that the Pharisees' "penetration" into the areas remote from Jerusalem "must have been limited" due to their precautions against the 'people of the countryside.'<sup>20</sup> This so-called '*am ha-aretz*' includes the Jewish people in Galilee. According to Aharon Oppenheimer, '*am ha-aretz*' has been associated "with Galilee, the cradle of Christianity, where there were [...] masses poor in the observance of the commandments and in the study of the Torah."<sup>21</sup> Oppenheimer suggests that "in the days of the Second Temple and in the generation of Jabneh [Yavneh] the Jewish character of Galilee was actually in doubt, seeing that it was populated by '*ammei ha-aretz*' who were devoid of the Torah and remote from Judaism."<sup>22</sup> I agree with Oppenheimer on this point, since, historically, Galilee was conquered by the Hasmoneans as late as 104 BCE.<sup>23</sup> Though the gentile residents of Galilee were converted at the time of conquest, it did not take long before the Roman domination began (63 BCE) and the cities surrounding Galilee were freed from Judea. As a result, according to M. Stern, "the Jewish centre in Galilee could be maintained only through the Jordan Valley" and "the large [H]ellenistic cities in Trans-Jordan and

---

<sup>20</sup> Sacchi, *History*, 265.

<sup>21</sup> Aharon Oppenheimer, *The 'Am Ha-Aretz: A Study in the Social History of the Jewish People in the Hellenistic-Roman Period*, trans. I. H. Levine (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977), 2.

<sup>22</sup> Oppenheimer, '*Am Ha-Aretz*', 200.

<sup>23</sup> A. Malamat et al., *A History of the Jewish People* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 219.

Scythopolis from Judean rule” “formed themselves into the Decapolis or Union of Ten Cities and resumed their life as independent cities.”<sup>24</sup> These facts make it less likely that Jesus had frequent interactions with the Pharisees in the region of Galilee, thus making one suspect the historicity of the narrative of Mark 7:1-23.

Lastly, the Pharisees moved to Yavneh due to the destruction of the Second Temple. According to S. Safrai, “Rabban Johanan ben Zakkai,” who is reported by the Babylonian Talmud (*Gittin* 56b) to have received “Yavne[h] and its Sages” after a confrontation with Vespasian, “was in Jerusalem at the time of the siege but left before the city fell.”<sup>25</sup> Safrai, based on “earlier Palestinian traditions,” suggests that “Rabban Johanan was initially a prisoner and was taken against his will to Jabneh [Yavneh], which, along with other towns, such as Ashdod and Gophna, served as a place of detention for those who had surrendered to the Romans.”<sup>26</sup> Since “Rome would hardly have given permission to establish a national centre, even if only a spiritual one,”<sup>27</sup> in Yavneh, it is hard to imagine that the Pharisees after 70 CE had dared to go beyond Yavneh to influence other Jewish or Christian communities, not to mention one in Rome. Though the Sanhedrin was reconvened in Yavneh and the religious practice of keeping the Jewish calendar was resumed, there seems to have been little development “of relations with the Diaspora, of the supervision of communities in the Land of Israel,”

---

<sup>24</sup> Malamat et al., *History of Jewish People*, 223.

<sup>25</sup> Malamat et al., *History of Jewish People*, 320.

<sup>26</sup> Malamat et al., *History of Jewish People*, 320.

<sup>27</sup> Malamat et al., *History of Jewish People*, 320.

even one generation later under the leadership of Rabban Johanan.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, I suggest that Mark's community could not have intersected with the Pharisees as a group in any meaningful way. This hypothesis will be an important basis for my thesis that the Pharisees in Mark 7:1-23 were the caricature of the Jewish Christians from Jerusalem.

The first appearance of the term Pharisee in Christian literature is in Q 11 (vv. 39a, 42, 39b, 41, 43–44), which contains a series of woe sayings against the Pharisees. It reflects the contentions which the community that produced Q had with their contemporary Pharisees. Considering the Jewishness of the Q community and the likelihood that the sayings were produced prior to the clear separation of Christianity and Judaism, this contention should be considered an intra-Jewish sectarian dispute, and not a conflict between Christianity and Judaism. The first one to have produced narratives that feature the character of Pharisees is Mark (2:13–17, 23–27; 3:1–6, 7:1–13; 8:11–14; 10:1–12; 12:13–17). Mark's initial narrative polemic against the Pharisees was reproduced by Matthew and Luke, thus providing a thick traditional basis for the antipathy between Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism. What if, however, Mark did not intend to polemicize against the Pharisees? What if Matthew and Luke amplified the polemic against the Pharisees based on their misunderstanding of Mark's intention and also reflecting their own actual situations versus the Pharisees (especially Matthew)?

There is no other proof that Jesus had conflict with the Pharisees than the textual witnesses internal of Q and Mark, if one agrees with Burton L. Mack, who argues that the woe sayings against the Pharisees were added later, thus do not belong to the historical

---

<sup>28</sup> Malamat et al., *History of Jewish People*, 321.

Jesus.<sup>29</sup> Still, no scholarly question was raised as to why Mark presents the conflict stories between Jesus and the Pharisees. It has been taken for granted that Mark actually cared about presenting to his audience what actually happened between the historical Jesus and the historical Pharisees despite the irrelevance of the character of the Pharisees in terms of the supposed *Sitz im Leben* of Mark's audience.

Among those passages that present a contention between Jesus and the Pharisees is 7:1–23, in which Jesus rebukes the Pharisees for their hypocrisy during the dispute over the issue of washing hands before eating. Analyzing the passage in the method of rhetorical criticism, its rhetorical purpose reveals itself in 7:19, in which Mark as the narrator explains the implication of Jesus's purity logion (7:15) as "declaring all foods clean." This rhetorical goal of freeing the gentile audience from the shackle of Jewish food law *is* relevant to the supposed *Sitz im Leben* of Mark's audience as a gentile-Christian community under possible surveillance of the Jewish-Christian community in Jerusalem, as indicated in Gal 2:11–16. If the character of the Pharisees in Mark 7:1–23 is understood as a caricature for the Jewish Christians who would visit gentile-Christian communities to push their legalistic agenda, the problem of irrelevance of the character of the Pharisees to the Markan audience is resolved. Thus, I suggest that there exists a hidden polemic in Mark 7:1–23, which is not against the Pharisees but against the Jewish-Christian community that Mark and his audience had contentions with over the issues of keeping Jewish food law.

---

<sup>29</sup> Burton L. Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993), 92–93.



In order to understand Mark's contentions with his Jewish-Christian opponents over the issues of keeping Jewish laws, one must first understand the phenomenon of judaizing in its historical context. The phenomenon of judaizing predates Christianity and might explain the large number of the Jewish population in the Roman Empire. According to Dieter Georgi, "[t]he Jewish population in the diaspora of the Roman Empire was almost three times as large as the Jewish population of Palestine, the Jews accounting for approximately one-seventh of the total population of the empire."<sup>30</sup> Georgi suggests that "the numerical strength of Judaism can be explained only if one takes into account, in addition to the no doubt significant natural increase of the Jewish population, that pagans were won over to the Jewish religious community."<sup>31</sup> Pointing to this phenomenon of active Jewish proselytism, Josephus writes about the succeeding periods after Antiochus Epiphanes that Jews "made proselytes of a great many of the Greeks perpetually, and thereby, after a sort, brought them to be a portion of their own body" (*B.J.* 7.45 [Whiston]). Dio Cassius (*Hist. rom.* 57.18.5a) and Tacitus (*Ann.* 2.85) also report that Jewish proselytism was happening in Rome during early first century CE (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 18.3.5).

What constitutes gentile conversion to Judaism? Shaye J. D. Cohen suggests that it "entails three elements": 1) "practice of the Jewish laws," 2) "exclusive devotion to the

---

<sup>30</sup> Dieter Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1986), 83.

<sup>31</sup> Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians*, 84.

God of the Jews,” and 3) “integration into Jewish community,”<sup>32</sup> referring to Achior’s conversion story in the book of Judith, in which Achior the Ammonite “believed firmly in God,” “was circumcised,” and “joined the house of Israel” (Jdt 14:10 NRSV). As indicated in Achior’s case, it seems that circumcision represented the second element of “practice of the Jewish laws.” We know from Josephus that John Hyrcanus imposed circumcision upon the Idumeans as a way of converting them to Judaism (*Ant.* 13.9.1). Josephus also reports of a Roman commander Metilius, who “begged for mercy and by promising to turn Jew and even be circumcised managed to save himself alone” while his soldiers were murdered unarmed (B.J. 2.17.10 [Williamson]). The phrase “μέχρι περιτομῆς ἰουδαΐσιν” (§454) indicates that circumcision can be optional but still the culmination of judaizing.

Considering the significance of circumcision in judaizing, the peculiar emphasis on circumcision by some Jewish Christians who belonged to the Jerusalem Church, as reported in Acts 15:5, indicates that they were merely attempting to continue the existing practice of Jewish proselytism when they imposed Jewish laws upon gentile believers. They seem to have viewed the Jesus movement that they had become involved in as another sect *within* Judaism. At the Council of Jerusalem (Gal 2:1–10), however, it was agreed among leaders of the Jerusalem Church and Paul that circumcision should be no longer a requirement for gentile believers. It seems that Paul’s report of the conflict at Antioch in Gal 2:11-16 after this agreement, since the gentile Christians in Antioch were

---

<sup>32</sup> Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 156.

not circumcised, thus still regarded potential “sinners” (v. 15) by Paul’s opponents. My thesis suggests that it is this kind of conflict that Mark 7:1–23 reflects.

## 1.2. Methods

Gregory J. Riley’s method of understanding certain ancient narratives as polemical rhetoric and Walter R. Fisher’s narrative paradigm as opposed to the rational world paradigm have become the theoretical foundation of the dissertation. On top of it, I will refer to James C. Scott’s theory of hidden transcript and its application by Richard A. Horsley, in order to understand Mark’s hidden polemic created among the relationship dynamics between Mark’s audience and his supposed opponents. I will also use Yairah Amit’s theory of hidden polemic in hopes of detecting some signs of hidden polemic in the given text.

In order to argue that Mark redacted Q, the two-source hypothesis is presupposed along with a positive consideration of Dennis R. MacDonald’s Q+/Papias Hypothesis. Since I believe that Mark redacted the sources available to him rather freely in order to achieve certain rhetorical purposes, I employ rhetorical criticism in analyzing Mark 7:1–23. Due to the rich symbolism of the Gospel of Mark and the possible intertextual relationship between Mark 7:1–23 and Gal 2:11–16, literary criticism is also employed. Due to a detectable degree of intertextuality between the Pauline tradition and the Gospel of Mark, the Pauline tradition will be suggested as a possible ideological platform of Mark. Historical events relevant to Mark’s date, provenance, and *Sit im Leben* will be

examined. The heresiological accounts by the church fathers will be referred to in order to identify the group that Mark polemicizes against.

### 1.3. Outline

In chapter two, the theoretical frameworks through which the given text will be reinterpreted will be suggested. I will discuss the theories by Gregory J. Riley and Walter R. Fisher on how ancient stories were used for rhetorical purposes. Also, James C. Scott's theory of hidden transcript along with its application by Richard A. Horsley will be examined in order to understand how a hidden polemic can be generated in a relationship between subordinates and those who dominate, or in a relationship among the subordinates as a result of their power relations. And an example of a polemic hidden in a narrative will be given. In chapter three, I will examine Mark's provenance, date, and structure. I will suggest that the Gospel was published for a gentile-Christian group in Rome shortly after 70 CE, but much of its material had been conceived in a region under the influences of both the imperial cult and the Jewish-Christian movement, since Mark polemicizes against both the imperial propaganda by Vespasian and the Jewish-Christian legalistic agenda. In chapter four, I will demonstrate that Mark develops a polemic against the Twelve throughout the Gospel as a way of undermining the authority of the Jerusalem Church and that the Pauline tradition is behind this polemic. Finally in chapter five, Mark 7:1–23 will be analyzed with the rhetorical-critical method in its intertextual relation with Gal 2:11–16, and its *Sitz im Leben* will be reconstructed.

## CHAPTER TWO: POLEMICS HIDDEN IN ANCIENT NARRATIVES

### 2.1. Introduction

I will suggest a few hypotheses to lay the theoretical foundation for my thesis that Mark 7:1–23 has a hidden polemic against Mark’s contemporary Jewish-Christian community. First, there is a character who, through the narrative form of polemical rhetoric, represents the community that carried the legacy of this figure. The plot that depicts this character in certain ways is the author’s literary way of creating a polemic through which the audience is expected to be persuaded to think or act in a way that fulfills the rhetorical intention of the author, especially in relation to the community that is represented by the character. Gregory J. Riley’s analysis of John 20:24–29 in relation to Thomasian Christianity will be used as an example.<sup>1</sup> Second, when there are two different documents that present the same polemical point for the same polemical situation and that deal with an identical polemical opponent(s) and subject, the two documents, despite their possible differences in genre or other aspects, are most likely to have stemmed from the same community, though possibly diachronically. Riley’s assessment of the three Thomas documents and the relationship between the Gospel of John and the Johannine epistles will be suggested as illustrations; the Gospel of Mark will be suggested as a deutero-Pauline Gospel. Also, Walter Fisher’s narrative paradigm will be consulted to postulate what necessitated the narrative form of the same rhetoric that

---

<sup>1</sup> Gregory J. Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered: Thomas and John in Controversy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 100–125.

was already extant in the form of an epistle. Third, when a polemic has to be directed against a target that the author somehow feels the author is not allowed to criticize openly—due to an unequal relationship that cannot be overturned or an apparent affiliation that cannot be betrayed—the polemic is hidden. A narrative is the safest place for it to hide because of its ability to present symbols that can only be understood by a specific group for certain cultural or circumstantial reasons. James C. Scott’s theory of hidden transcript, its application by Richard A. Horsley, and Yairah Amit’s theory of hidden polemic will be consulted. Lastly, Mark 7:24–30 will be suggested as an example of a hidden polemic that retains cultural symbolism that would only be a signal to its gentile audience, while presenting a sharp but hidden polemic.

## 2.2. Arguing by Telling a Story

It does not take postmodernism to see that there is no such thing as an objective historiography. E. H. Carr notes that “the historian is necessarily selective” of the facts of the past, thus an “element of interpretation enters into every fact of history.”<sup>2</sup> He proposes a new definition of history: “It is a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past.”<sup>3</sup> For example, some historians with a nationalistic agenda often intentionally ignore the facts of the past that appear threatening to the present national interest. Even Leopold von

---

<sup>2</sup> Edward Hallett Carr, *What Is History?*, ed. R. W. Davies, 2nd ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1987), 12, 13.

<sup>3</sup> Carr, *What Is History?*, 30.

Ranke, who was “committed to an ideal of historical objectivity, which he enshrined in his famous dictum—to present history ‘wie es eigentlich gewesen’ (‘as it actually happened’),”<sup>4</sup> is criticized for “the inevitable interplay between ideological and nationalistic preferences.”<sup>5</sup> According to Gregory Riley, the lack of objectivity is much clearer in ancient historical accounts by ancient historians, to whom “few means were available” to help them produce accurate descriptions, and of whom fewer “*wished* to produce such works.”<sup>6</sup>

“Historiography had a ‘point,’ which was exhortation and the promotion of one’s own truth, be it religious, political or philosophical,”<sup>7</sup> says Riley as he prepares the theoretical ground to understand the Johannine pericope of Doubting Thomas (John 20:24–29) as a polemic against the Thomasian christological position, especially on the nature of Jesus’s resurrection.<sup>8</sup> Riley uses the term *true story*, as opposed to *accurate description of historical events*, to characterize the historiography of the Gospel of John, defining *true history* as “the writing of the past in terms of the demands of the present, not seldom in heroic or archetypal categories,” a definition that resonates with Carr’s definition of history.<sup>9</sup> In other words, the Johannine community had the need to address

---

<sup>4</sup> James M. Powell, “The Confusing and Ambiguous Legacy of Leopold von Ranke,” *Syracuse Sch.* 9.1 (n.d.): 7.

<sup>5</sup> Shih-chieh (Jay) Su, “Modern Nationalism and the Making of a Professional Historian: The Life and Work of Leopold von Ranke” (Brown University, 2012), 17.

<sup>6</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 82.

<sup>7</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 82.

<sup>8</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 100–125.

<sup>9</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 82.

some issues, and the author of the Gospel of John wrote a true history featuring the past figures of Jesus and others to deal with the most current issues of his community.

Riley identifies one of the issues of the Johannine community as connected to the Thomasian community, with which the Johannine community had a rivalry; it can be detected in the way that John deals with the character of Thomas.<sup>10</sup> According to Riley, the characters in John are often literary, and they represent the groups that are characterized by their characters.<sup>11</sup> For example, Riley understands that “the Man Born Blind” represents “the rejected Johannine Christian (as the once-blind man)” and Nicodemus, “the secret believer of the synagogue.”<sup>12</sup> More importantly, Riley suggests that the literary remolding of John the Baptist in the beginning of the Gospel of John as the one who affirms Jesus’ messiahship by denying his own is the Gospel author’s “means of influencing the Baptist community in his own day.”<sup>13</sup> He also argues that “this portrayal of the Baptist at the beginning of the Gospel is a paradigm for the understanding of the figure of Thomas at the end of the Gospel.”<sup>14</sup> As with the paradigmatic case of John the Baptist, Thomas in John is also a literary character that the author created to represent “a community in the ‘present’ of the author which, like that of John the Baptist, was in competition with his own.”<sup>15</sup> Just as Riley characterizes the

---

<sup>10</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 80.

<sup>11</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 72–80.

<sup>12</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 72.

<sup>13</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 77.

<sup>14</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 77.

<sup>15</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 77.



Gospel of John's use of the character of John the Baptist to be "polemical," Riley sees the Gospel's presentation of Thomas as a polemic against the Thomas community, of which Thomas was the spiritual father.<sup>16</sup>

To comprehend the polemic within a narrative, the reader must identify the polemical situation, which consists of the polemical subject and the polemical opponent. Then, each party's stance on the subject should be identified, and the plot involving that character that is considered to represent the polemical opponent should be evaluated for its polemical significance. Riley does all these things in analyzing the pericope of Doubting Thomas (John 20:24–29).

Regarding the polemical situation, with the established polemical opponent of the pericope as John's contemporary Thomasian community, Riley identifies the polemical subject of the pericope as "the controversy over the spiritual or physical resurrection of Jesus."<sup>17</sup> Riley observes that early sources such as "the early *kerygma*," the "pre-Pauline Christ hymn (Phil 2:7–8)," and the Gospel of Mark "do not specify, or teach something other than a fleshly post-Easter Jesus."<sup>18</sup> The orthodox emphasis on the fleshly resurrection of Jesus is visible in later authors' works, such as Matthew, Luke, and John, not because it was argued from the beginnings of Christianity (since "the original community and proclamation were far closer to a 'spiritual' Jesus than to a Jesus raised in the flesh"), but because the orthodox needed to direct the message "toward the flesh of

---

<sup>16</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 74, 79.

<sup>17</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 154.

<sup>18</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 105–6.

Christ in order to counter” the docetic messages of “Greco-Roman traditionalists, Docetics [*sic*] and Gnostics.”<sup>19</sup> Unlike others who see “the purpose of the Thomas pericope as anti-docetic,” Riley clarifies that the issue that the pericope deals with is not docetism, which denies the physical death of Jesus, but “whether his *real* body was or was not raised”; it does this by emphasizing “the difference between the second century Gnostic systems and the Thomas tradition.”<sup>20</sup> Riley demonstrates that the Thomas tradition maintained that “Jesus had a real body” using the examples of *Gos. Thom.* 28; 79; 86; 99; 101, where the physical nature of Jesus is implicitly (79, 99, 101) or explicitly (28, 86) referenced.<sup>21</sup> If the Johannine author was well aware of this position of the Thomas tradition, the doubt that the author has Thomas raise (“unless I see in his hands the marks of the nails and I put my finger into the mark of the nails and put my hand into his side, I will definitely not believe”) questions not of the physical death of Jesus but about the fleshly resurrection of Jesus suggested by the report of the other disciples: “We have seen the Lord” (John 20:25 [Riley]).

Over this issue of the nature of Jesus’s resurrection, the stance that John takes maintains “the continuity of the physical body of Jesus through the transition of death, from passion to appearance.”<sup>22</sup> While Riley compares this Johannine understanding of the resurrection of Jesus to Vergil’s understanding of the shade of Hector, which involves

---

<sup>19</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 106.

<sup>20</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 104, 154.

<sup>21</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 129.

<sup>22</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 116.

“the retention of wounds” (a typical Greco-Roman depiction of the post-mortem existence), Riley still distinguishes this understanding from Paul’s, which “was far too easily interpreted in nonphysical categories, and was readily adopted by those who denied physical resurrection.”<sup>23</sup> According to Riley, “John adds the demand of Thomas to touch Jesus, the one thing reputed to be impossible in the Greco-Roman tradition concerning the souls of the dead,” to demonstrate his unique position on the nature of the resurrected body of Jesus and to reveal the central point of his polemic against the Thomasian community.<sup>24</sup>

Regarding the Thomasian stance on the issue of the nature of Jesus’s resurrection, Riley interprets *Gos. Thom.* 71, which reads, “Jesus said: I will destr[oy this] house, and no one will be able to build it,” as a Thomasian denial of fleshly resurrection, arguing that “the import of *GTh* 71 is that the body of Jesus will not be raised.”<sup>25</sup> Riley notes that the saying behind *Gos. Thom.* 71 was applied exclusively by John and *Gos. Thom.* in relation to the body of Jesus.<sup>26</sup> With the same inherited “free saying,” John affirms the bodily, fleshly resurrection of Jesus (2:19), while *Gos. Thom.* denies it. The Johannine awareness of this Thomasian denial of bodily resurrection is reflected in the sequence that consists of Thomas’s doubtful statement (20:25) and Jesus’s daring response (v. 27). Also, Riley demonstrates that the element of faith is utterly missing in the soteriological system of the

---

<sup>23</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 116.

<sup>24</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 116.

<sup>25</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 149, 153.

<sup>26</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 154.

Thomas tradition, by which “the enlightenment and Gnosis [...] made Thomas Christians of equal standing with Jesus and granted direct, unmediated access to God,” and in which “the way of hope and faith in someone else as a basis for the religious life, the method used by Johannine and other Christians, is in fact condemned.”<sup>27</sup> These two characteristics of the Thomas tradition—denying the resurrection and leaving out the element of faith—are combined and dramatized in the character of Doubting Thomas as John’s way of polemicizing against the Thomas community. John’s message to the Thomas community is clear: “Do not be faithless but faithful” (v. 27). The polemical adjective *faithless* (ἄπιστος), which appears only once in John’s Gospel and against Thomas only, criticizes the Thomasian community’s unbelief in the physical resurrection of Jesus, not just for the sake of clarifying the nature of Jesus’s resurrected body, but also to suggest faith in the resurrected Jesus as the necessary means (ὁδός) of salvation.<sup>28</sup>

To enhance the effectiveness of this polemical rhetoric, John denigrates the character of Thomas. Riley suggests that the epithet “one of the twelve” is intentionally used by John exclusively for Judas Iscariot (6:71) and Thomas (20:24), with the connotation that was generated in 6:71, in an attempt to closely associate them.<sup>29</sup> This epithet was first used by Mark for Judas Iscariot, perhaps to suggest Judas Iscariot as a metonymic character for the whole group of disciples; but, due to the repeated association of the epithet with Judas Iscariot (Matt 26:14, 47; Luke 22:3, 47), by the time of John’s

---

<sup>27</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 122, 120.

<sup>28</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 119–21.

<sup>29</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 107–8.

writing, the epithet might have functioned to remind readers almost exclusively of the character of Judas Iscariot. Riley also notes that “Judas” is Thomas’s real name (Thomas is merely an epithet meaning “twin”) and some manuscripts of the Gospel of John use Judas as another given name for Thomas (John 14:22), and both Judases are absent when the resurrected Jesus appeared to the disciples (20:24). However, the parallel passage of Luke 24:33 has only Judas missing, leading Riley to conclude that “‘Judas the One Who Betrays’ and ‘Judas the One Who Denies’ are both and uniquely designated in John by the same expression, ‘one of the twelve,’ the second use here [20:24] recalling the first [6:71].”<sup>30</sup> Given how despised the character of Judas Iscariot was by the time of John’s writing (Matt 27:3–5; Acts 1:18–20; cf. Papias, frag. 4:2–3), this association of Judas and Thomas is a huge denigration of Thomas. With this plot device carefully designed to denigrate the character of Thomas, John expects to assert more effectively the Johannine understanding of the nature of Jesus’s resurrection against the Thomasian unbelief in the physical resurrection of Jesus.

### 2.3. Why Bother Telling a Story?

Riley’s assessment of the Johannine pericope of Doubting Thomas gives a clear example of how the form of narrative was employed to make a polemical point more effectively. A message that is explicit in a discourse would not prevail over a message that is implicit in a narrative in terms of persuasiveness, perseverance, and procreation. A

---

<sup>30</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 110.

story engages people better, stays longer, and gets interpreted refreshingly over and over, while a discourse might lose people's attention, be forgotten soon, and be given less room for interpretation. Perhaps this was why the Homeric epics survived "harsh" Platonic criticism (*Resp.* 377e–378a), and prospered. The virtues that the Homeric *story* promotes are readily grasped because they are communicated through relatable characters, whether admirable or despicable, while it took the Allegory of the Cave (which is also a story) for an ancient reader to manage to understand Plato's *philosophical discourse* on παιδεία (*Resp.* 514a–520a).

Walter R. Fisher's understanding of *logos* and *mythos* might explain the ancient literary phenomena of the rhetorical use of narrative:

In the beginning was the word or, more accurately, the *logos*. And in the beginning, *logos* meant story, reason, rationale, conception, discourse, and/or thought. Thus, all forms of human expression and communication—from epic to architecture, from biblical narrative to statuary—came within its purview. At least this was the case until the time of the pre-Socratic philosophers, Plato, and Aristotle. As a result of their thinking, *logos* and *mythos*, which had been conjoined, were dissociated; *logos* was transformed from a generic term into a specific one, applying only to philosophical (later technical) discourse; poetical and rhetorical discourse were relegated to a secondary or negative status in regard to truth, knowledge, and reality; poetic was given province over *mythos*; rhetoric was delegated to the realm where *logos* and *mythos* reign in dubious ambiguity; and a historic hegemonic struggle ensued that lasts to this day among proponents of each of the three forms of discourse. (Walter R. Fisher, "The Narrative Paradigm: In the Beginning," *Journal of Communication* 35, no. 4 [1985]: 74)

Fisher divides human communication into three forms: philosophical (technical) discourse, poetical discourse, and rhetorical discourse. The originally comprehensive *logos* became a specific term that only refers to philosophical discourse, whereas *mythos* became separated from *logos* and was absorbed by the poetical discourse. Rhetorical discourse, by the way, has both elements of *logos* and *mythos*.

Fisher essentially considers all human communication to be rhetorical, and he proposes the “narrative paradigm,” which is “a dialectical synthesis of two traditional strands in the history of rhetoric: the argumentative, persuasive theme and the literary, aesthetic theme,” as an alternative to the “rational world paradigm,” which presupposes the following:

(1) humans are essentially rational beings; (2) the paradigmatic mode of human decision-making and communication is argument—clear-cut inferential (implicative) structures; (3) the conduct of argument is ruled by the dictates of situations—legal, scientific, legislative, public, and so on; (4) rationality is determined by subject matter knowledge, argumentative ability, and skill in employing the rules of advocacy in given fields; and (5) the world is a set of logical puzzles which can be resolved through appropriate analysis and application of reason conceived as an argumentative construct. (Walter R. Fisher, “Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument,” *Communication Monographs* 51 (1984): 2, 4)

Contrary to the rational world paradigm, the narrative paradigm presupposes the following:

(1) humans are essentially storytellers; (2) the paradigmatic mode of human decision-making and communication is “good reasons” which vary in form among communication situations, genres, and media; (3) the production and

practice of good reasons is ruled by matters of history, biography, culture, and character along with the kinds of forces identified in the Frenztz and Farrell language act [such as “implicit matters of knowledge, aesthetic expectations, institutional constraints, and propriety rules”]; (4) rationality is determined by the nature of persons as narrative beings—their inherent awareness of *narrative probability*, what constitutes a coherent story, and their inherent awareness of *narrative fidelity*, whether the stories they experience ring true with the stories they know to be true in their lives . . . ; and (5) the world is a set of stories which must be chosen among to live the good life in a process of continual recreation. (Fisher, 7)

Fisher’s proposal is his attempt to understand human communication as characterized not by either *logos* or *mythos* but by both. His intent to integrate *logos* and *mythos* back into *logos* in its original sense<sup>31</sup> can be sensed in his argument that all the genres of human communication are subsumed by narration: “There is no genre, including technical communication, that is not an episode in the story of life . . . and is not itself constituted by *logos* and *mythos*.”<sup>32</sup>

Without *mythos*, *logos* gets lost on the way to the human mind because of the human being’s essential characteristic as “*homo narrans*.”<sup>33</sup> Fisher’s narrative paradigm is based on this relatively holistic understanding of the epistemological reality of a person; he admits that his paradigm is founded on Alasdair MacIntyre’s anthropology,

---

<sup>31</sup> Fisher, “Narrative Paradigm: In the Beginning,” 75.

<sup>32</sup> Walter R. Fisher, “The Narrative Paradigm: An Elaboration,” *Commun. Monogr.* 52.4 (1985): 235.

<sup>33</sup> Fisher, “Narration,” 6.



which defines a person as a “story-telling animal,”<sup>34</sup> whose “‘enacted dramatic narrative’ . . . is the ‘basic and essential genre for the characterization of human actions.’”<sup>35</sup> If we understand the Gospels to have rhetorical goals and if we apply Fisher’s terms roughly to the components of the Gospels, then the sayings tradition, with its innate claim to have originated from the founder of the whole Christian tradition, seems to have been considered *logos* by the Gospel authors, while the aretalogical accounts of Jesus correspond to *mythos*; the Gospel authors employed the latter to contextualize the sayings tradition, each in his own way. Though the sayings of Jesus were circulated orally in easily remembered forms, it was the Gospel authors’ narrative contextualization of the inherited sayings that preserved them through the vagaries of time.

Applying Fisher’s concept of *logos* and *mythos* to Aristotle’s modes of persuasion, *ethos* and *pathos* should belong to the realm of *mythos*. The New Testament components that lack a clear narrative element, such as the sayings tradition or the Epistles, still have *ethos* and *pathos* as rhetorical discourses. For example, each Epistle has both *ethos* and *pathos* enough to communicate *logos* by virtue of the supposed relationship between the writer and the recipient(s). But when the sense of the actual relationship between the writer and the readers is lost in time, the Epistle loses much of its *ethos* and *pathos* for readers who do not know the author in person and are not in the situation that the letter once dealt with. Therefore, for the community that has a belief system (*logos*) that needs to be reaffirmed for the sake of maintaining its communal

---

<sup>34</sup> Fisher, “Narration,” 1.

<sup>35</sup> Fisher, “Narration,” 2.

identity, the need for employing narratives (*mythos*) emerges. For example, a sayings tradition that had been received and preserved in a faith community might have been contextualized into a narrative in order to be revisited to address new issues that arose for the community.

This literary phenomenon of adding more elements of *mythos* in a rhetorical discourse can be found among the different genres of writing that deal with the same issue from the same position. The Johannine Epistles' relationship to the Gospel of John is a good example. Bruce Vawter argues that 1 John was written prior to John,<sup>36</sup> offering the following reasons:

(1) The futurist eschatology of 1 Jn, common to the NT and also found in Jn, certainly predominates over the "realized eschatology" characteristic of the Gospel; most commentators agree, however, that the "spiritualized" interpretation of the last days represented in 1 Jn 2:18–29 is a less developed manifestation of the doctrine typical of the Gospel. (2) The representation of Christ's death as expiatory in 1 Jn (cf. esp. 2:2; 4:10), a doctrine especially associated with Paul, is present in the Gospel but has been incorporated by the Evangelist into the more distinctively Johannine theology of Christ's "glorification." . . . (3) Although the doctrine of Jn and 1 Jn about the divine persons is basically the same, a line can be traced from the somewhat fumbling terminology of 1 Jn to the firm formulations of the Gospel. This is particularly evident in such key terms as "Spirit," "Word," "Life," and "Paraclete." In general, one has the impression that between the writing of 1 Jn and Jn the author has become more assured of his own

---

<sup>36</sup> C.M. Vawter, Bruce, "The Johannine Epistle," in *JBC*, ed. Raymond Edward Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland Edmund Murphy (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1968), 405.

theology and thought and less derivative in his language and concepts. (Vawter, 405.)

I find Vawter's suggestion more convincing than Stephen S. Smalley's opposing position that 1 John's emphases on a futurist eschatology and the sacrificial death of Christ were intended to counter John's opponents' misapplication of the Gospel's presentation on the issues.<sup>37</sup> It is easier to believe that John was coping with criticism concerning the delayed apocalyptic reality by claiming a realized eschatology than that John went back to the futurist eschatology while the *parousia* felt so delayed. Also, Smalley does not give any reason why the evangelist's presentation of Jesus's death as "a glorified *exaltation* (John 3:14; 7:39; 8:28; 12:32, 34; 17:5)" should not be seen as John's theological development but should be seen as something that was "being distorted by his opponents," thus needing correction.<sup>38</sup> "No sufficient evidence can be presented to show that the author of the Johannine Letters used the Fourth Gospel," affirms George Strecker.<sup>39</sup>

I would like to suggest that John was written later since the narrative contextualization of the theological points that are made in 1 John is clearly visible in John. Among the many terminological and conceptual parallels that 1 John and John have, 1 John 2:7–8 and John 13:34–35 provide a clear example of John's narrative contextualization of a passage from 1 John. This "*agapē* commandment" seems to have

---

<sup>37</sup> Stephen Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John*, WBC (Dallas: Word Books, 1984), xxvii.

<sup>38</sup> Smalley, *1, 2, 3 John*, xxvii.

<sup>39</sup> George Strecker, *The Johannine Letters: A Commentary on 1, 2, and 3 John*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1996), xl, 5.

been the Johannine way of interpreting the Jewish commandments, just as they had been summarized in Mark 12:29–31, and therefore it was the key doctrine that defined the community. To show the crucial importance that the *agapē* commandment has in terms of defining the identity of the Johannine community (John 13:35) and of addressing the secessionist issue, the author of the Gospel reemphasizes it by having Jesus say it as his *will*. Jesus announces his impending departure (vv. 31–33) and then gives the *agapē* commandment, followed by the clarification that his departure actually means his death (v. 38), thus presenting the commandment as his will. The *agapē* commandment is also chiastically presented in 13:31–38, with its centrality underscored. The elements of narrative, such as Judas Iscariot going to betray Jesus (vv. 21–30) and Peter asserting his loyalty in vain (vv. 36–38), were employed to present *logos*, the *agapē* commandment, through more *mythos*, in order to dramatically intensify the rhetorical impact. It is hard to imagine that 1 John 2:7–8 and 2 John 7–8 extracted the *agapē* commandment from such a heavily narrativized passage and decontextualized it. Also, because the narrative version is later, it shows signs of thorough development: the *agapē* commandment that was not new in 2 John 5 was called “old” in 1 John 2:7, but was re-characterized as “new” in the next verse (v. 8), and finally, it is just “new” in John 13:34.

This literary phenomenon of narrative contextualization for the sake of reinforcing an existing argument can be found in Thomas Christianity. Riley sees the *Book of Thomas* as “in many ways a continuation and development of Thomas Christianity found in the *Gospel of Thomas*, displaying several parallels and

dependencies of both theme and specific content,”<sup>40</sup> and he shows that the Thomasian soteriology the *Gospel of Thomas* presents is inherent in the *Book of Thomas* (138.6ff).<sup>41</sup> Some may say that the shift in genre between the two texts is insignificant because the *Book of Thomas* is just a conversation, which the *Gospel of Thomas* occasionally is. My observation is that the narrative elements of the *Book of Thomas* can be viewed as ways of contextualizing *Gos. Thom.* 108, in which Jesus says, “Whoever drinks from my mouth will become like me; I myself shall become that person, and the hidden things will be revealed to him” (Patterson and Meyer).<sup>42</sup> This saying has already been narrativized in *Gos. Thom.* 13, where Thomas is said to have drunk “from the bubbling spring” (Patterson and Meyer) that Jesus tended and to have heard three secret sayings from Jesus, which serves as a way to point to Thomas as the one who became like Jesus. In the *Book of Thomas*, Thomas is Jesus’s “twin and true companion” (138.7–8 [Turner]) to whom “the hidden things” are revealed (138.21–139.12 [Turner]).<sup>43</sup> Here the character of Thomas himself is employed as a narrative element to add *mythos* to communicate *logos*—primarily the Thomasian soteriology—more effectively.

---

<sup>40</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 157.

<sup>41</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 120.

<sup>42</sup> Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover, and The Jesus Seminar, eds., *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1997), 529. The *Gospel of Thomas* used in this copy is a translation by Stephen Patterson and Marvin Meyer.

<sup>43</sup> James M. Robinson, ed., *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1990), 201–2.

A similar observation can be made regarding the relationship between the Pauline tradition and the Gospel of Mark. Mark's emphatic statement that a person is saved by faith, embedded in the impressive dual narratives of the woman who suffered from bleeding for twelve years (5:34) and of Bartimaeus (10:52), reflects the soteriology that resembles Paul's. This hypothesis that Mark includes narrative contextualization of the Pauline tradition will be further discussed in chapter 3, and it will be argued that Mark 7:1–23 has a significant intertextual relationship with Gal 2:11–16.

#### 2.4. When Telling a Story Is the Only Way . . .

In Mark 7:1–23, the narrative form was employed not just for the sake of enhancing Mark's rhetorical impact but also because of the social location in which Mark found himself and his audience in relation to the Jewish-Christian community. Mark used a story to create a room in which to hide his polemic against the Jewish-Christian community. In other words, his narrative is not just a powerful tool for persuasion but also a convenient way of hiding a polemic.

James C. Scott's theory of the public transcript and the hidden transcript in power relations should warn a reader of a biblical text not to take everything at face value—his basic premise is that “power distorts communication.”<sup>44</sup> The disparity in power between the dominant and the subordinate creates the disparity between “what is said in the face

---

<sup>44</sup> James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 1–16, 32.

of power” and “what is said behind its back.”<sup>45</sup> In other words, in an unequal power relation, while there is the public transcript, which is “the open interaction between subordinates and those who dominate,” beneath it exists the hidden transcript, which is the “discourse that takes place ‘offstage,’ beyond direct observation” by the other party.<sup>46</sup> The public transcript is where the dominant discourse is presented by the dominant group and is usually accommodated to by the subordinate group’s performance. Thus, it is shared by both parties. However, the hidden transcript is not shared—the subordinate and the dominant groups each have their own hidden transcript that they exclude from the public transcript. And “the hidden transcripts of dominant and subordinate are, in most circumstances, *never in direct contact*.”<sup>47</sup> “For this reason,” Scott suggests, “political analysis can be advanced by research that can compare the hidden transcript of subordinate groups with the hidden transcript of the powerful and both hidden transcripts with the public transcript they share” in order “to reveal the effect of domination on political communication.”<sup>48</sup>

Scott observes that “the frontier between the public and the hidden transcripts is a zone of constant struggle between dominant and subordinate—not a solid wall,” and this points to “a third realm of subordinate group politics that lies strategically between the first two [transcripts],” which is “a politics of disguise and anonymity that takes place in

---

<sup>45</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 5.

<sup>46</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 2, 4.

<sup>47</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 15.

<sup>48</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 15.

public view but is designed to have a double meaning or to shield the identity of the actors.”<sup>49</sup> Scott gives the following examples of genre that fit this description: “rumor, gossip, folktales, jokes, songs, rituals, codes, and euphemisms—a good part of the folk culture of subordinate groups.”<sup>50</sup> Through these genre, “subordinate groups manage to insinuate their resistance, in disguised forms, into the public transcript.”<sup>51</sup> These disguised forms are essentially a hidden transcript expressed in the realm of the public transcript with the help of disguise and anonymity, demonstrating that the relationship between the hidden transcript and the public transcript is ever “dialectical.”<sup>52</sup> However, in order for the subordinate group to create and nurture a hidden transcript that becomes mature enough to affect the public transcript, the group requires an offstage social space, insulated from “control and surveillance from above,” which does not have to be physically distant “from the dominant so long as linguistic codes, dialects, and gestures—opaque to the masters and mistresses—[are] deployed.”<sup>53</sup> In short, a hidden transcript that is engendered, nurtured, and coded in a social space insulated from the dominant group presents itself in the public transcript as a way of resistance.<sup>54</sup>

Richard A. Horsley uses this theoretical framework to understand the New Testament. Horsley asserts that Scott’s theory “opens up for New Testament interpreters

---

<sup>49</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 14, 18–19.

<sup>50</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 19.

<sup>51</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 136.

<sup>52</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 27.

<sup>53</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 118, 121.

<sup>54</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 20.



a whole range of popular political dynamics that often lie hidden (underneath or ‘between the lines’ of our sources) between acquiescence and active revolt.”<sup>55</sup> He suggests that “some materials in the New Testament were, in their historical origins, representatives of ‘hidden transcripts,’ the politics of disguise, and even more public forms of resistance by subordinated people.”<sup>56</sup> According to Horsley, from the New Testament studies that are “based squarely on extant sources from the public transcript,” there is “completely missing [...] any sense of the effect of domination on the views of both the dominant and (especially) the subjugated, who comprised the vast majority in Palestine and the cities of the Roman Empire and certainly those involved in both Jesus’ movement and Paul’s mission.”<sup>57</sup> Horsley suggests that “the priestly aristocracy in the temple” and “the Romans, along with the allied elites in control of Greek cities and provinces of the East”<sup>58</sup> were the two primary dominant groups in first-century Palestine, and they performed their dominant discourses in the public transcripts to continue their domination. Because of these circumstances of oppression, the first Christian literature, such as the Pauline epistles and Q, were born as hidden transcripts in which the

---

<sup>55</sup> Richard A. Horsley et al., *Hidden Transcripts and the Arts of Resistance: Applying the Work of James C. Scott to Jesus and Paul*, ed. Richard A. Horsley, SemeiaSt (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 11.

<sup>56</sup> Richard A. Horsley, “Introduction—Jesus, Paul, and the ‘Arts of Resistance’: Leaves from the Notebook of James C. Scott,” in *Hidden Transcripts and the Arts of Resistance: Applying the Work of James C. Scott to Jesus and Paul*, ed. Richard A. Horsley, SemeiaSt 48 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 11, 12.

<sup>57</sup> Horsley, “Introduction,” 13.

<sup>58</sup> Horsley, “Introduction,” 6.

resentment evoked by domination found its expression.<sup>59</sup> As Scott explains, “The practices of domination and exploitation typically generate the insults and slights to human dignity that in turn foster a hidden transcript of indignation.”<sup>60</sup>

Q 12:2–5 provides great internal evidence that Q displays a hidden transcript:

2 Nothing is covered up that will not be exposed, and hidden that will not be known. 3 What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear <<whispered>> in the ear, proclaim on the housetops. 4 And do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but cannot kill the soul. 5 But fear . . . the one who is able to destroy both the soul and body in Gehenna. (IQP)

Jesus indicates that his discourse was being addressed to his audience privately, “in the darkness,” and thus it has the defining characteristic of a hidden transcript. It also seems clear that when Jesus refers to “those who kill the body” but not the soul he is referring to the dominant group that establishes the power relations whereby domination creates fear and indignation. The audience is encouraged not to be afraid of those who are dominant, implying that they *were* afraid of them due to the power imbalance controlled by them. Jesus explains the inevitability of the eventual publication of the hidden transcript, and he commands the audience to take over the public transcript.

In the following passage of 12:6–12, Jesus describes a hypothetical situation in which one of his followers has to bring the hidden transcript out in the open: “When they bring you before synagogues, do not be anxious about how or what you are to say; for

---

<sup>59</sup> Horsley, “Introduction,” 8.

<sup>60</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 7.

[[the holy Spirit will teach]] you in that . . . hour what you are to say” (Q 12:11–12 [IQP]). Despite the clear principle of reciprocity in acknowledging the Son of man in public, denying the Son of man will be forgiven; but expressing what the Holy Spirit teaches one to say in public is strongly encouraged because that is the only way the hidden transcript will be revealed in order to subvert the dominant discourse. The public testimony of the Jesus movement during its inception might not have been about the name of Jesus itself but about the message embedded in the hidden transcript that would inevitably surface due to its resonance with people.

Walter Wink interprets Matthew 5:39–41, in which Jesus tells his listeners to turn their other cheek when struck on their right cheek, as Jesus’s instruction to resist the humiliating “backhand slap,” assessing that the action of turning the other cheek “robs the oppressor of the power to humiliate.”<sup>61</sup> As Scott emphasizes, the hidden transcript “does not contain only speech acts but a whole range of practices,” which in the case of Jesus and his followers would include turning the other cheek when struck on the right cheek, giving one’s cloak as well when one’s tunic is taken, and going two miles when forced to go a mile (Matt 5:38–41).<sup>62</sup> Wink considers all of these examples nonviolent acts of defiance based on his hypothesis that Jesus was describing oppressive settings, where the dominant discourse is presented and thus reinforced.<sup>63</sup> Matthew has Jesus quote the Mosaic law of retribution (“an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,” Matt

---

<sup>61</sup> Walter Wink, *Just Jesus: My Struggle to Become Human* (New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2014), loc. 569, 576 of 1613, Kindle.

<sup>62</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 14.

<sup>63</sup> Wink, *Just Jesus*, loc. 667-718 of 1613.

5:38), which might have been part of the hidden transcript of other Jewish political groups, but which would work against the subordinate in the context of the public transcript; then Jesus gives alternative instructions—the coded actions that are expected to subvert the *Zeitgeist* that undergirds the public transcript, thus changing its pattern by revealing in public the hidden transcript of Jesus that affirmed the human dignity of the subjugated as God’s children.

Horsley observes that a hidden transcript is also “developed as the result of power relations among the subordinated themselves.”<sup>64</sup> This observation that a hidden polemic is not just created in response to the public transcript dominated by the dominant but also generated in response to a public transcript of a peer community is illuminating in understanding the intra-ecclesiastical disputes found in the Pauline letters. Horsley says, “In the Pauline letters [...] Paul himself, as a self-designated authority figure of the wider movement of subordinated peoples, is attempting to shape the developing hidden transcript of the respective assemblies,” such as the gentile Christians in Galatia or the ones in Philippi.<sup>65</sup>

In the case of Galatians, Paul, as a “renegade” member of the Jewish Christian group that was relatively dominant in the power relations among the Christian groups due to their claim of kinship to Christ, ignores “the standard script,” just like “Brahmins who publicly defy the regulations of caste purity” or “plantation owners who spoke

---

<sup>64</sup> Horsley, “Introduction,” 20.

<sup>65</sup> Horsley, “Introduction,” 20.

sympathetically of abolition.”<sup>66</sup> At the same time, he cultivates the doctrinal ground for the Galatian hidden transcript that would defy the Jewish Christian public transcript presented to them, which involved the issues of circumcision and food laws. Just as subjugated groups “cannot reliably and fully penetrate the hidden transcript of the powerful,” and thus “are obliged to make inferences from the text of power presented to them in the public transcript,” the gentile Christians in Galatia did not have a clue as to the hidden reasons why the Jewish laws were imposed upon them and why the Jewish disciples would not eat with them. In the public transcript, it was for the sake of the gentiles’ piety and holiness. Paul, however, allows his recipients to peek into the Jewish-Christian hidden transcript by quoting his opponent(s)—“We are Jews by birth and not of gentile sinners” (Gal 2:25)—perhaps intending to cause some indignation for the sake of creating the Galatian hidden transcript.<sup>67</sup>

Yairah Amit’s concept of hidden polemic, which is to be discussed in chapter five, corresponds to the *literary form* of the hidden transcript.<sup>68</sup> A hidden transcript, as soon as it is written down, makes itself available for publication. Thus it is often encrypted through the arts of political disguise before it is written down. While Scott lists “anonymity,” “euphemism,” and “grumbling” as “Elementary Forms of Disguise,” he

---

<sup>66</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 67.

<sup>67</sup> Paul would not call his gentile recipients “sinners,” and there are other instances where Paul quotes his opponents without stating that he is doing so. This point will be discussed more later.

<sup>68</sup> Yairah Amit, *Hidden Polemics in Biblical Narrative* (Boston: Brill, 2000), 93–98.

suggests “trickster tales” as best illustrating “the veiled cultural resistance of subordinate groups.”<sup>69</sup> He explains the character of the trickster as follows:

It would be difficult, I think, to find a peasant, slave, or serf society without a legendary trickster figure, whether in animal or human form. Typically the trickster makes his successful way through a treacherous environment of enemies out to defeat him—or eat him—not by his strength but by his wit and cunning. The trickster is unable, in principle, to win any direct confrontation as he is smaller and weaker than his antagonists. Only by knowing the habits of his enemies, by deceiving them, by taking advantage of their greed, size, gullibility, or haste does he manage to escape their clutches and win victories. Occasionally the fool and trickster figures are combined, and the guile of the underdog may consist in playing dumb or in being so clever in the use of words that his enemy is misled. (Scott, 162)

According to Scott, first, the social location of the trickster and his schemes directly reflects those of the subordinate group that circulates the tale.<sup>70</sup> Second, a trickster tale would contain much violence directed against the antagonists as a means of catharsis.<sup>71</sup> Because of this resemblance the story has to “the existential dilemma of subordinate groups” the subordinate can “identify with the protagonist” and learn from him ways to deal with the dominant.<sup>72</sup> However, due to the disguises that are the characters in the tale, the tale can be passed on without worrying too much about punitive consequences.

---

<sup>69</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 138–56, 162.

<sup>70</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 163.

<sup>71</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 163.

<sup>72</sup> Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*, 163, 164.

The Gospel of Mark as a whole can be viewed as a trickster tale written down. Just as a trickster would make “his successful way through a treacherous environment of enemies out to defeat him . . . not by his strength but by his wit and cunning,” Jesus makes his way through his enemies’ plot to kill him, not by resisting it but by taking up the cross, thus becoming “Christ crucified,” which is “the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Cor 1:23–24 NIV). While the hidden transcript is encrypted, the Markan trickster tale still features the motif of violent vengeance typical of the genre for the sake of catharsis: the Roman legion is disguised in the character of the demons whose name is “Legion,” which are sent into the pigs and drowned in the lake (5:1–11). Likewise, the Jewish disciples with their hardened hearts are likened to the Pharisees (6:52; 8:14–19; cf. 3:4–5), whose hypocrisy is strongly criticized (7:6–13) and whose end is grimly prophesied along with the destined destruction of the Temple (12:1–12; 13:1–2). Both the Roman legion and the Jewish disciples were not to be criticized directly and openly, due to the power relations that the Markan community had with them. However, the Markan community had no meaningful relationship with the historical Pharisees, since the influence of the Pharisees that survived the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE could not have had reached beyond Yavneh; thus, there was no barrier to criticizing them but also no practical reason for criticizing them per se either. In a tale, criticizing the figures that pose no practical threat and cause no harm signals that the figures are being employed as a disguise for other figures who cannot be referred to directly, just as “once upon a time in a land far, far away” is a formulaic expression used to avoid acknowledging that the events and the characters that are about to be featured are of “here and now.” Lastly, just as the audience of a trickster tale can identify with the

protagonist of the story, the listeners to the Gospel of Mark could not only identify with Jesus but also were “baptized into Christ” (Gal 2:27) in pursuit of union with Christ, as the story of Bartimaeus, which shall be discussed later in depth, would have encouraged them to do.

## 2.5. Mark’s Winking at the gentile Audience

As demonstrated in the case of the trickster tale, telling a story is a convenient and engaging way of reflecting a hidden transcript on published pages, since it has ample room in its characters and plots for symbolism and sympathy. Now I will suggest Mark 7:24–30 as an example of a story that hides a polemical discourse. The most controversial element of the story is that the Syrophoenician woman is likened to a puppy by Jesus (v. 27). The woman insists on her right to receive healing for her daughter with the reply that “even the puppies under the table eat the children’s crumbs” (v. 28), for which Jesus grants her her wish (v. 29). The reference to dogs is Mark’s literary device of encrypting his hidden message that Jesus was welcomed in the gentile world more readily and genuinely, while he was rejected and misunderstood in Jewish communities. The groundwork for Mark’s argument has been laid in the preceding passages where Jesus is not welcomed in his home town (6:1:5), and his divine identity is not understood by his own Jewish disciples (6:47–50). Mark 6:53–56 signifies that Jesus moved to a gentile region, where he was received enthusiastically; and 7:1–23 functions as a signal that the mission to the gentiles has been officially launched since the obstacle to the gentile mission has been removed through the declaration that all food is clean (7:19).



Because of the differences in the cultural connotations that a dog carries in Jewish society and gentile society, a Jewish audience is blocked from understanding the real meaning of the passage, while a gentile audience gets it. What the reference to dogs must have reminded any gentile individual of would be Argus, Odysseus's faithful dog. Argus was the most famous dog in the Hellenistic world, where the Homeric epics were taught, memorized, and celebrated, and he is known for his undying loyalty to his master. Argus faithfully waited for his master Odysseus for twenty years, after which time Odysseus finally came back to his own town, yet in disguise. While even Odysseus's faithful servant Eumaeus was unable to recognize the disguised Odysseus, the dog, who was "abandoned on the heaps of dung from the mules and cattle" and "full of vermin" quickly recognized him, "lifted his head and pricked his ears," but immediately "wagged his tail and dropped his ears," lacking "the strength to come nearer to his master" (*Od.* 17.290–300).<sup>73</sup> Odysseus had to turn "his eyes away" from the dog so as not to reveal his identity, but it was not without shedding a tear secretly (17.300). And as Odysseus left Argus, the dog died, "the moment he caught sight of Odysseus—after twenty years" (17:320). Just as Odysseus was not recognized nor welcomed by his own people, but was recognized and welcomed by his dog, Jesus was not welcomed by his own Jewish people and his identity was not understood by his own Jewish disciples, but he was recognized and entreated by the gentile woman whom Jesus likens to a dog. A gentile reader would have made this connection easily and would have decrypted the hidden message that Jesus, by referring to dogs, was actually complimenting the woman for the virtue of recognizing Jesus for who he was. Mark uses this narrative as a positive example for his argument

---

<sup>73</sup> Homer, *The Odyssey*, trans. E. V. Rieu (London: Penguin Books, 2003).

that Jesus ministered to the gentiles, thus the gentile Christians can claim a direct relationship to and inheritance from Jesus, while some of the narratives that precede and follow this story function as negative examples of how Jesus was not received well among the Jews and was finally betrayed by the man whose name means “Jew.”

The connotations that a dog had in the Jewish world were not so positive. Despite a few positive references in Job 30:1 and Tobit 6:2 and 11:4,<sup>74</sup> *dog* could mean “a homosexual male prostitute,”<sup>75</sup> and it was a common derogatory term Jews used for gentiles.<sup>76</sup> Matthew, talking primarily to a Jewish-Christian audience, finds the reference to dogs as an opportunity to promote his missiological position, seemingly not understanding the cultural connotation that a dog carried in gentile society. While redacting Mark 7:24–30 into Matt 15:21–28, Matthew inserts into the middle of the pericope the statement, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt 15:24; cf. 10:6), which is considered not to be an authentic saying of Jesus by the Jesus Seminar, making the statement the central point of the pericope in an attempt to suggest that Jesus actually had a missiological priority for the Jews.<sup>77</sup> Matthew, whether he just missed Mark’s point or intentionally ignored it, uses Mark 7:24–30 to present a position completely opposite to Mark’s.

---

<sup>74</sup> Geoffrey David Miller, “Attitudes toward Dogs in Ancient Israel: A Reassessment,” *JSOT* 32.4 (2008): 487.

<sup>75</sup> John Barclay Burns, “Devotee or Deviate: The ‘Dog’ (Keleb) in Ancient Israel as a Symbol of Male Passivity and Perversion,” *J. RelSoc.* 2 (2000): 1.

<sup>76</sup> Joshua Schwartz, “Dogs in Jewish Society in the Second Temple Period and in the Time of the Mishnah and Talmud,” *JJS* 55.2 (2004): 273.

<sup>77</sup> Funk, Hoover, and Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels*, 203.

In Mark 7:24–30, the hidden transcript is that Jesus ministered to the gentiles as a result of the rejection he experienced in Jewish society. Thus, the gentile Christians have a claim to a firsthand relationship with Jesus, rendering the Jewish Christian influence over the Markan community unjustified. This hidden transcript was caused by the power relationship in which the gentile Christians felt religiously colonized. Due to the public transcript controlled by the Jewish Christians that dictated the reasons for following the legalistic instructions of the Jewish Christians, their resistance had to be encrypted into the story of the Syrophoenician woman using cultural symbolism that prevented a Jewish readership from understanding the message, while at the same time communicating it to a gentile audience.

## 2.6. Conclusion

Not all polemics had to be hidden. The Johannine polemics in the form of narratives plainly refer to the names of figures, indicating that no one community was too dominant over others. They were rivals, but peers. Still, the polemics were narrativized for the sake of rhetorical effectiveness. But an unequal power relationship would have made it necessary to encrypt the polemics, and telling a story that would communicate different messages to different groups was not too difficult a task for an ancient *homo narrans*, with his Homeric imagination and Aristotelian art of rhetoric. Without understanding the rhetorical function of narrative and the kind of power relation within which a particular narrative is situated, we might still enjoy the aesthetic of an ancient story, but we would not be able to “get it.” Mark 7:1–23, as a narrative that was born in

circumstances in which the Jewish Christian influence was still at work, in the absence of an apostle for the gentiles, should reveal so much more if read with an understanding of the rhetorical function of narrative and the concept of hidden transcripts or hidden polemics.

## CHAPTER THREE: AN OVERVIEW OF MARK

### 3.1. Introduction

To understand Mark 7:1–23, it is important to have an understanding about the overall structure and contents of the entire Gospel, which if successfully assessed are expected to provide some helpful clues to the purpose of writing the Gospel and, in turn, to the purpose of composing the given pericope. Another preliminary research, which has to take place as one looks into the given text, regards Mark's audience, date, and provenance. These data will provide clues to the political dynamics in which Mark's audience found themselves and to how Mark responded to them. The context (audience, date, provenance, and political dynamics) and the text are mutually complementary and should not contradict each other. If one contradicts the other, either one is wrongly assessed, or both are.

Mark's Gospel is a polemical rhetoric in the form of narrative.<sup>1</sup> Mark seems to have aimed at the imperial propaganda of Vespasian and at those who believed that Vespasian was the fulfillment of Jewish messianic prophecy. Mark also interweaves this polemic seamlessly with the polemic against the Jewish disciple group with whom Mark and his audience seem to have had contentions over the issues of Jewish laws and Christology. Since the kind of Christology that would project Jesus as Son of God could

---

<sup>1</sup> Incigneri, *The Gospel to the Romans: The Setting and Rhetoric of Mark's Gospel*, 42. Incigneri suggests that Mark's Gospel is a rhetoric that utilizes narrative. Incigneri argues that narrative is a "powerful form of rhetoric that is quite different from letters or speeches, on which much of rhetorical criticism has focused" and that Mark uses narrative because "it directly linked to the reader's own story."

prevail over the imperial propaganda of Vespasian, the relatively low Christology that the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem generally held had to be disputed. Mark does this by narrating an aretalogy and by criticizing the Twelve disciples, who represent the Jerusalem Church, for their inability to understand who Jesus was despite the aretalogy. A trace of Pauline influence is also found in the Gospel and it seems that the polemic against the Jewish Christians was also motivated by Pauline theology and the kind of tension that Paul had with the Jewish disciples over the matter of gentile mission. Overall, the Gospel of Mark reflects two circumstances: the pervasive imperial propaganda of Vespasian and an intra-ecclesiastical dispute between the Markan community and the Jewish Christians over the matters of the laws and Christology.

### 3.2. Early Christianity and the Imperial Cult

The Roman Emperor cult formed an important part of the environment in which Christianity was born. Palestine, as “the cradle of Christianity,”<sup>2</sup> became subjected to Roman rule, after Pompey took Jerusalem in 63 BCE.<sup>3</sup> Then, it seems that the imperial cult was introduced to the region by Herod the Great, who reigned from 37 BCE to ca. 4 BCE. Herod built “three pagan temples dedicated to Augustus – at Sebaste, Caesarea, and

---

<sup>2</sup> David E. Aune et al., *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament* (*Blackwell Companions to Religion*), ed. David E. Aune (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 15.

<sup>3</sup> Lester L. Grabbe, *An Introduction to Second Temple Judaism: History and Religion of the Jews in the Time of Nehemiah, the Maccabees, Hillel, and Jesus* (London: T&T Clark International, 2010), 20.

Paneias.”<sup>4</sup> Even though the Jewish people were “exempted from participating in emperor worship in any form whatsoever,”<sup>5</sup> they were once directly affected by the imperial cult “when in 40 CE Caligula planned to place his own statue into the Jerusalem temple,”<sup>6</sup> which never happened due to his assassination. Not only within Palestine but also in the cities of Asia Minor and Greece, the imperial cult was pervasive in the days of early Christianity. As Richard Horsley observes, “honor and festivals for the emperor were not only widespread but pervaded public life, particularly in the cities of Greece and Asia Minor, the very area of Paul’s mission.”<sup>7</sup> Tacitus’s report about Nero’s persecution against the Christians attests to the fact that at least by the time of Nero Christians were recognized as a group distinct from the Jewish sects and no longer were exempted from participating in the imperial cult (Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.44).<sup>8</sup> Due to their shared monotheism, the Jewish people and the Christians were concerned to respond theologically to the invasive presence of the imperial cult among them one way or another. It was more so with Christians with their christological claims.

The Roman imperial cult had begun with Caesar, continued through Augustus and the following emperors, and was further developed by Vespasian. Helmut Koester

---

<sup>4</sup> Ehud Netzer, *Architecture of Herod, the Great Builder* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 271.

<sup>5</sup> Sacchi, *History*, 297.

<sup>6</sup> Grabbe, *An Introduction*, 26.

<sup>7</sup> P. A. Brunt et al., *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*, ed. Richard A. Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 4.

<sup>8</sup> Tacitus, *Annals 13-16*, trans. Clifford H. Moore, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937), 282–85.

suggests Julius Caesar as a possible beginning point of the imperial cult, arguing that the assassination of Caesar “resulted in Caesar’s divination, spontaneously enacted by the people and later sanctioned by the Senate, which officially accepted Caesar among the gods of the Roman people and erected an altar for him.”<sup>9</sup> However, the assassination of Caesar was not what started the imperial cult. According to Ittai Gradel, Caesar was in the process of becoming a god as he achieved a series of victories in the wars for the Roman state.<sup>10</sup> Gradel observes that “in the last months of Caesar’s life” he was “decreed state divinity, with a cult name (*Divus Iulius*), state priest (*flamen*), a state temple, and a sacred couch—*pulvinar*—for his image,” which represented “all the paraphernalia of the main gods of the Roman state.”<sup>11</sup> The fact that Caesar received divine honors while alive signifies that death was not a necessary condition for worshiping an emperor as god.

With this observation, Ittai Gradel attempts “to place state apotheosis of dead emperors in basically the same context as that of worship of the living ruler.”<sup>12</sup> And Gradel thinks that the context of worship of the living ruler is characterized by the concept of mutual obligation. Therefore, what Gradel suggests is that the imperial cult should be understood as a social contract in which both parties are mutually obliged to do the duties. He says,

---

<sup>9</sup> Helmut Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament: History, Culture, and Religion of the Hellenistic Age*, 2nd ed. (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 1:351.

<sup>10</sup> Ittai Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 54.

<sup>11</sup> Gradel, *Emperor Worship*, 54–55.

<sup>12</sup> Gradel, *Emperor Worship*, 369.



By honouring, worshipping included, the ruling emperor, his subjects established with him a social contract mutually binding for both parties. This was the basic reason behind all honours, whether to gods, rulers, or patrons: by receiving such honours, the emperor was morally obliged to return benefactions, that is, to rule well. If he did so, he could eventually attain honour: state divinity after death. Alternatively, if he broke the contract, his honours would be withdrawn and his memory condemned. This, and not an attempt to falsify history, was the main point behind damnation of his memory. (Gradel, 369–70.)

Viewing the imperial cult as a social contract that required mutual obligation makes it easier to understand why the imperial cult posed not much threat to the core christological claims by the early Christians until Vespasian arose. After Augustus no Julio-Claudian emperor except Claudius received divine honors due to their failure to fulfill the obligation on their side. Even Claudius's divine honors were given to him "out of pity" only to be rescinded by Nero and later restored by Vespasian.<sup>13</sup> While Caesar and Octavian earned their right to be apotheosized, the ones after Augustus and before Vespasian failed in the framework of the imperial cult that Caesar and Augustus provided. However, Vespasian seems to have intended to take full advantage of this framework. According to Hans-Josef Klauck, Vespasian contributed "to the further development of the imperial cult."<sup>14</sup> Klauck observes that Vespasian not only allowed the

---

<sup>13</sup> Craig A. Evans, "Mark's Incipit and the Priene Calendar Inscription: From Jewish Gospel to Greco-Roman Gospel," *J. Greco-Roman Christ. Jud.* 1 (2000): 79.

<sup>14</sup> Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions*, trans. Brian McNeil (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 308.

imperial cult “to take its course in the East” but also “truly introduced it to the western provinces” of the Roman empire for the first time.<sup>15</sup>

### 3.3. Vespasian and the Gospel of Mark

There has been a suggestion by Craig A. Evans that the imperial propaganda of Vespasian prompted the writing of Mark. Evans compares the elements of the Roman imperial cult and the elements of the Gospel of Mark.<sup>16</sup> The links that he finds between the imperial cult and Mark include the shared use of the term “good news” (εὐαγγέλιον),<sup>17</sup> the healing miracles by the agent of the good news, the post-mortem deification of the agent, the description of the divinized son of God as being seated at God’s right hand, and the assertion that the advent (παρουσία) of the son of God will inaugurate a new era.<sup>18</sup> After pointing out these similarities, Evans asserts that “it seems clear that the evangelist [Mark] has deliberately echoed an important theme of the Roman imperial cult.”<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> Klauck, *Religious Context*, 308.

<sup>16</sup> Evans, “Mark’s Incipit,” 67–81.

<sup>17</sup> Klauck, *Religious Context*, 298. Klauck explains that the concept of εὐαγγέλια “belongs to the established repertoire of the imperial cult, and is applied to the birthday of the emperor, his coming of age, his ascent of the throne, and his recovery of health.”

<sup>18</sup> Evans, “Mark’s Incipit,” 70–76.

<sup>19</sup> Evans, “Mark’s Incipit,” 77.

Evans uses the Priene Calendar Inscription as an important evidence that Mark used the terminologies of the imperial cult.<sup>20</sup> He finds terminological similarities between the inscription and Mark's incipit. The inscription has, “ἤρξεν δὲ τῷ κόσμῳ τῶν δι’ αὐτὸν εὐαγγελίων ἡ γενέθλιος τοῦ θεοῦ” (*OGIS* 458),<sup>21</sup> while Mark 1:1 has “Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [Υἱοῦ Θεοῦ].”<sup>22</sup> Both refer to good news, the beginning of the good news, and the agent that brings the good news, despite some differences. In the Priene Calendar Inscription, the good news is in plural (εὐαγγέλια); the beginning of the good news is referred in the verbal form (ἄρχειν); and the agent of the good news is Augustus, while, in Mark, the good news is in its singular form (εὐαγγέλιον); the beginning is expressed in a noun (ἀρχή); and the agent of the good news is Jesus.<sup>23</sup> The fact that the Priene Calendar Inscription is dated to ca. 9 BCE and “is actually a composite text, extensively reconstructed with the help of parallel inscriptions found at Apamea, Eumeneia, and Dorylaeum”<sup>24</sup> makes it likely that its contents was known to Mark.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> James W. Aageson et al., *Hearing the Old Testament in the New Testament*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2006), 93–94.

<sup>21</sup> Wilhelm Dittenberger, ed., *Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1905).

<sup>22</sup> Barbara Aland et al., eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 28th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012).

<sup>23</sup> Evans, “Mark’s Incipit,” 69.

<sup>24</sup> Evans, “Mark’s Incipit,” 68.

<sup>25</sup> This argument that Mark knew the contents of the inscription is compatible with Mark’s provenance as Rome, which was the origin of this inscribed propaganda.

More specifically, Evans sees the Gospel of Mark as Mark's response to the belief that Vespasian was the fulfillment of Jewish messianic prophecy.<sup>26</sup> Evans observes that Josephus's prophecy that Vespasian would become emperor (*B.J.* 3.8.9) was based on Josephus's interpretation of Num 24:17 (*B.J.* 6.5.4), which makes Vespasian's rise to emperorship the fulfillment of the Jewish messianic prophecy.<sup>27</sup> He assumes that the rumor that Vespasian was the fulfillment of the Jewish messianic prophecy was widely known in Rome, based on the writings of Suetonius (*Vesp.* 4.5; 5.6) and Tacitus (*Hist.* 5.13.1–2),<sup>28</sup> arguing that this rumor prompted Mark to come up with a counterargument that Jesus is the Son of God and the true fulfillment of the Jewish messianic prophecy, not Vespasian.<sup>29</sup> With this argument, Evans jumps to suggest that "the Gospel of Mark was published the same year as Vespasian's accession and may also have been published in Rome."<sup>30</sup> This conclusion on the date of Mark seems hasty because even if Mark had intended to respond to the propaganda of Vespasian there seems to have been not much reason for Mark to keep the deadline as before 70 CE.

---

<sup>26</sup> Aageson et al., *Hearing the Old Testament*, 86. This view has as its premise that Mark's Gospel was written after the imperial propaganda of Vespasian became operative enough to have induced a literary response to it. Since Evans believes that Mark wrote before the fall of Jerusalem, his assumed range of Mark's time of publication becomes very specific between 69 CE and early 70 CE.

<sup>27</sup> Aageson et al., *Hearing the Old Testament*, 89–91.

<sup>28</sup> Aageson et al., *Hearing the Old Testament*, 90.

<sup>29</sup> Aageson et al., *Hearing the Old Testament*, 94–95.

<sup>30</sup> Aageson et al., *Hearing the Old Testament*, 95.

### 3.4. Public Images of Vespasian

Adam Winn gives a virtually identical argument as Evans's regarding the motivation for writing the Gospel of Mark, though differing in that Winn dates Mark after 70 CE.<sup>31</sup> In reconstructing Mark's historical situation, Winn argues that there was "a christological crisis brought about by the propaganda of the new Roman emperor Vespasian, in particular the claim that Vespasian was the true fulfillment of Jewish messianic prophecy and expectations."<sup>32</sup> Winn first draws parallels between Vespasian and Augustus, suggesting that Vespasian imitated Augustus "to secure his position and his favor among the people."<sup>33</sup> According to Winn, besides the given parallel that both emperors achieved the emperorship through winning a civil war and bringing peace to the empire, Vespasian imitated Augustus in humility and reluctance in embracing power, as it is reported by Josephus that he refused the imperial power when he was initially acclaimed emperor by his legions (*B.J.* 4.10.4), and also in becoming "a true benefactor to the Roman citizens" by providing "for their physical needs, often using his own finances to do so."<sup>34</sup>

However, unlike Augustus who was able to rely on his linkage with Caesar and indeed emphasized his inherited status as *Divi Filius*, Vespasian did not have the advantage of noble origin. While Suetonius records a divine nativity story portraying

---

<sup>31</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark's Gospel*, 76.

<sup>32</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark's Gospel*, 203.

<sup>33</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark's Gospel*, 165.

<sup>34</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark's Gospel*, 166.

Augustus as son of Apollo (*Aug.* 92), the historian seems to have found no divine birth story for Vespasian and records what he could, for example, that his father was an honorable “honest” tax collector (*Vesp.* 1). Winn points out that “Son of God” as a title is not used to call Vespasian since “it was not a claim which he could make.”<sup>35</sup> However, Vespasian is reported by Tacitus (*Hist.* 4.81) and Dio Cassius (*Hist. rom.* 65.8.1) to have healed a blind man and another man with a withered hand, and by Suetonius a blind man and a man with a disabled leg (*Vesp.* 7).<sup>36</sup> These stories of divine healing might have functioned to compensate for the disadvantage that Vespasian had in the origin story. Winn underlines the fact that “Vespasian, unlike any other first-century emperor, was credited with the healing of two men,” suggesting that “these events were a significant piece of Flavian propaganda.”<sup>37</sup> It seems that the image of a divine healer became an important part of the public images of Vespasian. If someone were to polemicize Vespasian, he or she must have been challenged to deal with these virtuous public images of Vespasian, on the top of the rumor that he was the fulfillment of Jewish messianic prophecy: a military conqueror that arose from the East to fulfill the Jewish messianic prophecy and brought peace to the Roman empire; a humble first citizen that is reluctant to be enthroned, therefore is worthy of emperorship; a generous benefactor of the people; and a divine healer.

---

<sup>35</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark's Gospel*, 182.

<sup>36</sup> Suetonius has “*alius debili crure*” (“another weak in a leg”).

<sup>37</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark's Gospel*, 184.

### 3.5. Vespasian and Mark's Jesus

If enough parallels are found between Mark's Jesus and Vespasian, the argument by Winn and Evans that the imperial propaganda of Vespasian prompted the writing of Mark is supported by internal evidence. The parallels are detected in Mark's literary attempts to project Jesus as a figure far better than Vespasian. While the rumor that Vespasian was the fulfillment of Jewish messianic prophecy was part of the imperial propaganda of Vespasian, Mark titles Jesus as "Christ" from the very beginning (1:1), the title which, if properly understood, indicates a figure that would fulfill the Jewish messianic prophecy. And this "Christ" is also Son of God (1:1). Though some early manuscripts omit "Υἱοῦ Θεοῦ" in Mark 1:1 (ⲡ\* Θ 28. l 2211 pc sa<sup>ms</sup>), soon in the baptism scene (1:9–11) it is explicitly demonstrated that Jesus Christ is also Son of God. While this bifold christological argument recurs throughout the Gospel, its pinnacle is the transfiguration scene (9:2–10), in which Elijah and Moses as the obvious representatives of the Jewish Scripture effectively affirm the identity of Jesus as Messiah by conversing with Jesus and the voice from the cloud affirms once again that Jesus is Son of God.

While Vespasian was a military conqueror, because he won the civil war against Vitellius; his son crushed Jerusalem; and he had all the Roman legions "under his control, available to do his bidding,"<sup>38</sup> Mark's Jesus is portrayed as a spiritual conqueror, who exercises the spiritual power to command the spiritual beings (1:23–28, 32–34, 39; 3:11; 5:1–20; 7:24–30; 9:14–29, 38–41).<sup>39</sup> Also, similar to Vespasian, who as a reluctant

---

<sup>38</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark's Gospel*, 184.

<sup>39</sup> Richard A. Horsley, *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 189–90. Interestingly enough,

emperor seems to have forbidden the worship of the emperor's *Genius* as a gesture of humility,<sup>40</sup> the recurring motif of the Messianic secret (1:23–25, 34, 43–45; 3:11f.; 4:10–13, 34; 5:43; 7:17–23, 36; 8:26, 30; 9:9, 28f., 31; 10:32–34; 13:3ff.) might also have been intended to highlight “Jesus’[s] modesty and his reluctance to accept public messianic recognition,” as Winn suggests.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, Winn points out that, while Vespasian was a generous benefactor who provided the people with grain and money, Jesus not only feeds people twice miraculously (6:30–44; 8:1–10) but also “gives his life as a ransom for many” (10:45), as further illustrated in the scene of the last supper (14:22–25).<sup>42</sup>

If these parallels were all that there are, one could argue that Mark is comparing Jesus with Augustus, and suggest a different political situation for the writing of Mark. However, there is one more parallel that is unique between Vespasian and Jesus: Both were divine healers. The noteworthy parallel is already drawn when Vespasian, unlike other emperors, is reported to have healed a blind man with his spittle and another man with a withered hand since both instances of healing correspond so closely to the two healing instances of Jesus in Mark 8:22–25 and in 3:1–6.<sup>43</sup> Of course, Mark's Jesus

---

in Mark 5:1–20, Jesus casts out the demon named “Legion,” which makes one suspect if Mark's intention was to allude to Roman military power, as Richard A Horsley suggests.

<sup>40</sup> Gradel, *Emperor Worship*, 189–90.

<sup>41</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark's Gospel*, 191. In my opinion, the curious case of the Markan Jesus' refusal to be called “good” (Mark 10:18) can also be explained by Mark's intention to portray Jesus as a humble Messiah.

<sup>42</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark's Gospel*, 188–89.

<sup>43</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark's Gospel*, 184–85.



abounds in aretalogy of divine healing (1:40–45; 2:1–12; 5:21–42; 7:31–37; 10:46–52) and even raises the dead (5:21–42).

These parallels provide meaningful evidence for the argument by Evans and Winn that the imperial propaganda of Vespasian prompted the writing of Mark. It might not have been the sole motivation since there are other motifs in Mark, which are not directly related to the polemics against Vespasian. But, to say the least, the imperial propaganda of Vespasian must have constituted an important part of Mark's motivation.

In the meantime, Evans and Winn do not agree on the date of Mark's publication, though they agree that Mark wrote in Rome for the Christians in Rome, who must have been affected by the imperial propaganda more directly than those who were not in Rome. I am hesitant to agree with Evans on his argument that Mark wrote before the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple,<sup>44</sup> since it must have taken more time than two years, after Vespasian's rise to emperorship, for the imperial propaganda of Vespasian to have its effect enough to give rise to a full-blown Christian literary response to it, such as the Gospel of Mark. One of the reasons that Evans suggests to back his argument that Mark wrote before 70 CE is that Jesus tells the disciples to "pray that the siege not take place in winter" (13:18) while it actually took place in the spring and summer.<sup>45</sup> This, however, should be viewed rather as the very proof that Mark has Jesus refer to the event *post factum*, because Mark might have wanted to say that the siege took place in the spring

---

<sup>44</sup> Aageson et al., *Hearing the Old Testament*, 87n12. Evans says, "I believe the most probable date of the publication of Mark is 69 CE or early 70, before the fall of Jerusalem."

<sup>45</sup> Aageson et al., *Hearing the Old Testament*, 87n12.

and summer as the result of prayer. Thus, I agree with Winn's argument that Jesus's prophecy on the destruction of the temple was written *post factum*. Winn also indicates that even Jesus's prophecy of the temple's destruction was part of Mark's polemic against Vespasian since it undermines "Vespasian's victory over the Jews, which culminated in the temple's destruction."<sup>46</sup> Because of this prophecy of Jesus, "Vespasian becomes merely an instrument used for enacting Jesus'[s] prophecy."<sup>47</sup> It would have been easier to discard this last parallel as far-fetched if the previous set of parallels had not been considered. But if Mark indeed had Vespasian in mind as a person generally regarded to be responsible for the destruction of the Jerusalem temple but still had intended to present the event as something that had been done according to the divine plan as any Jewish or Christian writer would do, the date of Mark would still have to be *post* 70 CE, whether the parallel regarding the destruction of the Temple was intended or not.

### 3.6. Polemics against Jewish Groups

Thus far, I have reviewed the Gospel of Mark in relation to Roman imperial cult, which was no doubt an important environment in which early Christians found themselves, and reached the conclusion that Mark wrote after 70 CE, based on the possibility that Mark wrote his Gospel as a polemical response to the impact that the imperial propaganda of Vespasian had on Mark's audience. The argument by Evans and

---

<sup>46</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark's Gospel*, 187.

<sup>47</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark's Gospel*, 188.

Winn that Mark deliberately responded to the propaganda of Vespasian, as persuasive as it may be, is by no means comprehensive. There exist contents in Mark that are not explained solely by this approach. One of them is the explicit polemics against the Jewish groups centered around the Temple cult; another is the implicit polemics against the Jewish disciples. These two sets of polemic are not directly related to the imperial propaganda but still indirectly related to it, since they are polemicized for the lack of understanding Mark's christological claim that Jesus is both Christ and Son of God, the claim that was reviewed above as directed against the imperial propaganda. The Jewish groups did not accept Jesus as Christ, while the Jewish disciples did not understand Jesus's identity as Son of God.

Mark's polemics against the Jewish groups, such as scribes (γραμματεῖς), Pharisees (Φαρισαῖοι), Sadducees (Σαδδουκαῖοι), high priests (ἀρχιερεῖς), and Herodians (Ἡρῳδιανοί), can be seen to have some characteristics of intra-Jewish polemic. Though Mark seems to address a gentile audience, since there are passages where Mark had to explain Jewish customs (7:2–4; 15:42) and translate Aramaic words (3:17; 5:41; 7:11, 34; 15:22, 34), Mark still engages in polemics against the Jewish groups. As a possible precedent of this literary phenomenon that the author talks to a gentile audience as he engages in an intra-Jewish polemic, Paul records his engagement in a polemic against the Jewish disciples from Jerusalem in Gal 2:11–16. This polemic by Paul, according to James Dunn, reveals echoes of intra-Jewish polemic.<sup>48</sup> Dunn suggests Gal 2:15, which has, “We are Jews by birth and not of the gentile sinners,” as the first instance of the

---

<sup>48</sup> James D. G. Dunn, “Echoes of Intra-Jewish Polemic in Paul's Letter to the Galatians,” *JBL* 112.3 (1993): 462–70.

echoes of intra-Jewish polemic.<sup>49</sup> Though it seems that Paul is actually quoting his opponent(s) here, as he does in 1 Corinthians 6:12–13 in which Paul quotes his opponent’s statements only to refute them, Paul is indeed engaging in an intra-Jewish polemic with the Jewish people who claim to be “Jews by nature” (v. 12).

Timothy Wardle suggests that the Gospel of Mark displays the characteristics of Jewish sectarianism. His criteria of Jewish sectarianism include components such as “a numerically small group, particular interpretative stance towards the Jewish law, insider/outsider mentality[,] and critical appraisal of the Jerusalem temple and its current priesthood.”<sup>50</sup> He argues that Mark reveals “all of these sectarian tendencies, with the most distinct being its view of the temple.”<sup>51</sup> Indeed, Mark seems to speak not just to any crowd but to a rather narrowly defined group, that is, a gentile Christian group, to whom the true meanings of the parables are explained, thus making the audience insiders and not outsiders (4:11; 7:17). Also, Mark’s Jesus presents his own interpretations of the Jewish law (2:25–27; 3:4; 7:9–13; 10:2–12, 19–21; 12:18–27, 28–34), and criticizes the temple cult and its leaders (11:15–17; 12:1–12), ultimately prophesying the destruction of the temple (13:1–2), meeting all five criteria provided by Wardle.

Wardle, based on the fact that the literature “critical of the temple and its overseers arose almost exclusively in circles geographically and socially contiguous to

---

<sup>49</sup> Dunn, “Echoes of Intra-Jewish Polemic,” 462.

<sup>50</sup> Timothy Wardle, “Mark, the Jerusalem Temple and Jewish Sectarianism: Why Geographical Proximity Matters in Determining the Provenance of Mark,” *New Testam. Stud.* 62.1 (2016): 76.

<sup>51</sup> Wardle, “Mark,” 76.

the sanctuary and its presiding priests,”<sup>52</sup> argues that Mark’s provenance should be somewhere “near the city of Jerusalem such as the Decapolis in Syria.”<sup>53</sup> Although I hold Rome as the place of Mark’s publication, the sectarian elements in Mark are not so negligible that they should make one ask questions as to where those *Jewish* elements came from. Even though the date of Mark was suggested to be after 70 CE, the material that constitutes the polemic against the Jewish groups might have been formed prior to 70 CE. This means that Mark can be considered at least to have used or formed the kind of literary material that Wardle argues to have arisen near Jerusalem. Even if Mark’s actual polemic against the Jewish groups was written after the destruction of the Temple, Wardle’s argument can still be referred to as meaningful and be applied in terms of detecting the origin of Mark’s Jewish-sectarian elements, since any Jewish sect that survived the destruction of the Temple still remained in the region of Palestine. Some Jewish Christians allegedly fled to Pella before 70 CE and the Pharisees were allowed to settle in Yavneh. Also, according to Eusebius, there was a Jewish Christian group in Jerusalem until it was besieged by Hadrian (*Dem. ev.* 3.5.124). The Jewish sectarian groups, whether before or after the destruction of the Second Temple, lingered within Palestine. Therefore, in order for Mark to have engaged in an intra-Jewish polemic in a meaningful way, the presence within or near Palestine still seems to have been an important condition. However, for the reason that Mark not only must have been exposed to an intra-Jewish polemic but also was directly influenced by the Roman imperial cult at the same time, I suggest an area in the northern part of Syria closer to Asia Minor, where

---

<sup>52</sup> Wardle, “Mark,” 77.

<sup>53</sup> Wardle, “Mark,” 77.

Apamea and Antioch are located, as a possible place in which Mark's polemical ideas were formed, since Apamea is one of the places where the Priene Calendar inscription was found and Antioch is where Paul's intra-Jewish polemic in Gal 2:11–16 took place.

This does not mean that Mark's provenance was not Rome. One must distinguish between the place of inception of the materials used by Mark and the place in which they were compiled and published. Wherever the materials that constitute the contents of Mark might have come from, since Mark's audience is supposed to have had not much pre-understanding of the Pharisees, along with other reasons given in the introduction, I still hold Rom as Mark's place of publication, or at least the place in which his target audience was located. But since Mark knew about the Pharisees well enough to explain their characteristics, it can be argued that Mark's polemical ideas had their inception in a place near Palestine. Also, holding the northern Syria as a possible place of inception of Mark's polemics against the Pharisees-like Jewish Christians helps to support my suggestion that Mark 7:1–23 reflects a *Sit im Leben* similar to that of the Antiochean church as reflected in Gal 2:11–16.

If Mark indeed wrote after 70 CE, the polemics against the Jewish groups listed above might not have had much meaning except as an explanation for the death of Jesus, because most of them, except for some Pharisees and some Jewish Christians, disappeared.<sup>54</sup> The priest group, which seems to be the most conspicuous target of

---

<sup>54</sup> Sacchi, *History*, 302. According to Sacchi, the priesthood, which the Sadducees were closely associated with, disappeared after the Temple was destroyed. Sacchi observes that Essenism also disappeared in 70 CE, though the Essenes are not mentioned in Mark.

Mark's explicit polemic against Jewish groups, disappeared along with the Temple. Also, it seems that Mark's audience themselves did not know very well the Jewish groups being explicitly polemicized by Mark, nor had any meaningful interaction with them. Therefore, the only polemic that had any practical implication in the lives of Mark's audience would have been the implicit polemic against the Jewish disciples, supposing that Mark's audience had had contact with the Jewish Christian group which is represented by the characters of the Jewish disciples in the Gospel. However, the relationship that Mark's audience had with the Jewish Christian group and the supposed polemical interaction between the two groups still demonstrate the characteristics of that polemic among the Jewish sects. It was one of contention and rivalry.

The relationship between Mark's audience and the Jewish Christian group that Mark had to deal with, however, would not have been an equal relationship due to the Jewish Christian group's claim that the "gospel" of Jesus had its "beginning" (cf. Mark 1:1) with them. This unequal power dynamic was typical in and was expected of a relationship between a group which handed down a religious tradition and the other group that received that religious tradition. For example, in Gal 2:11–16 the kind of religiously-colonializing attitude that the overseers from Jerusalem had toward the gentile Christians in Antioch demonstrates the unequal power dynamics between the two groups. This kind of imbalance of power would often generate grudges, thus polemics. However, just as the polemic against the imperial propaganda had to be subtle due to the disadvantageous political circumstances, the criticism against the Jewish disciples could not take an explicit form due to the nature of the relationship that Mark's audience had with the Jewish Christian group. As discussed in chapter two, this implicit or concealed

way of criticism can be called hidden polemic or hidden transcript. One of the most interesting features of a hidden polemic or a hidden transcript is that it often uses the text that originated from or belongs to the target of the polemic, as a way of distorting or subverting the public transcript expressed in it. Mark makes use of the text of the imperial propaganda right back against the empire in order to have Jesus compete with and prevail over the public images of the emperor. Mark also uses the text of the Jewish Christians, such as the sayings tradition of Jesus, in order to criticize the Jewish Christians.

### 3.7. Chiastic Structure

With these presuppositions, the structure and contents of Mark will be examined. It seems that the Gospel of Mark employs the literary device of chiasmus. A chiasmus is “a passage in which the second part is inverted and balanced against the first,”<sup>55</sup> as in “Un pour tous, tous pour un.” A chiastic structure is most easily formed in a sentence, but “it can be extended to sentences and longer developments,”<sup>56</sup> depending on the author’s intention and skill. According to George A. Kennedy, chiasmus is a device “commonly found in ancient texts and given labels by modern critics” but “not identified at all in handbooks of the classical period.”<sup>57</sup> Augustine Stock argues that the ancient Greek and

---

<sup>55</sup> Hedley Lowry Yelland, S. C. Jones, and K. S. W. Easton, *A Handbook of Literary Terms* (Boston: The Writer, 1980).

<sup>56</sup> Augustine Stock, “Chiastic Awareness and Education in Antiquity,” *BTB* 14.1 (1984): 23.

<sup>57</sup> George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 1984), 28.



Roman education in its special way, such as making the young students memorize the Alphabet forward (A, B, Γ, ...); backward (Ω, Ψ, X, ...); and in the chiastically paired way (AΩ, BΨ, ΓX, ...), inculcated “chiastic awareness” in the young students.<sup>58</sup> As a result, according to John W. Welch, “chiasmus appears in Greek and Latin writing from the time of Homer to later Roman authors.”<sup>59</sup> Therefore, it is natural to expect that Mark might also have employed chiasmus in writing his Gospel.

The purpose of a chiasmus is to emphasize the point by putting it in the middle of the structure. Welch explains that “an emphatic focus on the center can be employed by a skillful composer to elevate the importance of a central concept or to dramatize a radical shift of events at the turning-point.”<sup>60</sup> James R. Edwards, who calls chiasmus “*a sandwich technique*,”<sup>61</sup> argues that “*the middle story* [of a chiasmus] *nearly always provides the key to the theological purpose of the sandwich*.”<sup>62</sup> Therefore, after detecting the existence of chiasmus in a literary work, the most important task becomes locating the centerpiece of the chiasmus. By locating the center of each chiastic passage or even of the entire Gospel in its supposed chiastic design, the presuppositions discussed above

---

<sup>58</sup> Stock, “Chiastic Awareness,” 24.

<sup>59</sup> John W. Welch, *Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1981), 250.

<sup>60</sup> Welch, “*Chiasmus in Antiquity*,” 10.

<sup>61</sup> James R. Edwards, “Markan Sandwiches: The Significance of Interpolations in Markan Narratives,” *Novum Testam.* 31.3 (1989): 194.

<sup>62</sup> Edwards, “Markan Sandwiches,” 196.

regarding the overall purposes of Mark should be verified against the themes that emerge in the located chiastic centers.

In order to avoid any arbitrary imposing of a chiastic reading, a set of criteria to determine a chiasmus needs to be introduced. Nils W. Lund suggests seven criteria: First, the center “*is always the turning point*”; second, the center often contains a shift of thought; third, identical ideas are often put “in the extremes and at the center of their respective system, and nowhere else in the system”; fourth, the ideas that occur in the center of one system recur in the extremes of another system, which has been “constructed to match the first” (This criterion is termed by Lund “*the law of shift from centre to the extremes.*”); fifth, certain terms (divine names, quotations, or specific theological terms) gravitate toward certain position in a given system; sixth, “larger units are frequently introduced and concluded by *frame-passages*”; and lastly, a mixture of chiastic and alternating lines frequently occur within the same unit.<sup>63</sup> Having evaluated these criteria to be too descriptive, Welch comes up with his own set of criteria, one of which is *purpose*.<sup>64</sup> Welch lists some examples of possible purposes of employing chiasmus: “concentrating attention on the main point of a passage by placing it at the central turning point, drawing meaningful contrasts, aiding in memorization, or emphasizing the feeling of closure upon the conclusion of a lengthy repetition.”<sup>65</sup> Why

---

<sup>63</sup> Nils Wilhelm Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament: A Study in Formgeschichte* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1942), 40–41.

<sup>64</sup> John W. Welch, “Criteria for Identifying and Evaluating the Presence of Chiasmus,” *J. B. Mormon Stud.* 4.2 (1995): 5.

<sup>65</sup> Welch, “Criteria,” 5.

would a writer try to fulfill all these suggested purposes? If chiasmus is considered a rhetorical technique, the answer is to persuade better. Thus, the criterion which I would suggest is if the suggested chiastic center conveys the rhetorical point of the author.

Mark's attempt to build a chiastic structure for the whole Gospel is rather conspicuous at both ends of the Gospel. The first obvious parallel is found between 1:2–7 and 16:1–7. 1:2–7 presents John the Baptist as the forerunner who was sent before (πρὸ προσώπου) Jesus and prepares his coming, while 16:1–7 has a young man (νεανίσκος) as Jesus's post-runner who informs that Jesus goes before (προάγει) the disciples to Galilee. The second parallel is found between the passage regarding Jesus's baptism (1:9–11) and the passage regarding Jesus's death (15:37–39). Just as Jesus saw the heavens being torn open (σχιζομένους) as soon as he had come up from the water (1:10), after Jesus died the veil of the temple was torn (ἐσχίσθη) into two from top to bottom. Also, the Spirit (Πνεῦμα) descended upon Jesus after baptism (1:10), while the word that Mark chose to use to describe Jesus's moment of death is “ἐξέπνευσεν” (15:39), which in a literal sense can be translated as “he let out the spirit” or “he expired.” More importantly, Jesus's divine sonship is declared by the voice from the heavens (1:11) after the Spirit descended on him, while the centurion, having witnessed that Jesus thus expired, testifies to Jesus's divine sonship. Another less obvious parallel is found between 1:16–18, in which Simon and his brother follow (ἀκολουθέω) Jesus, and 15:21, in which another man named Simon carries (αἶρω) the cross (τὸν σταυρὸν) of Jesus. These two distant passages with the two figures with the same name make a chiastic parallel in contrast. 1:16–18 with the verb “ἠκολούθησαν” in v. 18 and 15:21 with the phrase “ἄρῃ τὸν σταυρὸν” point to 8:34b, where Jesus establishes the conditions to be met in order to follow Jesus: denying

(ἀπαρνεομαι) oneself and taking up one's cross. While the verb ἀκολουθέω appear frequently in Mark, 15:21 and 8:34b contain the same identical verb which takes the identical noun (which appears only four times in Mark) as the object, thus justifying the link between them:

[...] ἀράτω τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ [...] (8:34)

[...] ἄρῃ τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ (15:21).

Also, the narrative about Simon Peter in 14:66–72 functions as a quintessential counterexample of the criteria of discipleship underscored in 8:34, demonstrating how Simon who followed Jesus initially in 1:16–18 denied (ἀπαρνεομαι) not himself but Jesus and did not take up the cross, while the other Simon did take up the cross (15:21), thus endorsing the initial chiastic parallelism between 1:16–18 and 15:21.

These three rather obvious instances of chiastic parallel at both ends of the Gospel invite one to look for more evidence of the chiastic structure for the entire Gospel. And when the chiastic parallelism is somewhat established between the two passages, the formerly ambiguous contents of a given passage might be understood more clearly in light of its supposed chiastically-corresponding pair. For example, the implications of the rather peculiar ending of the Gospel might be explained by finding its parallel. If Mark indeed intended the abrupt ending (16:8) as is, it might be that the ending was meant to correspond to the incipit of the Gospel. Simply put, 16:8 was Mark's answer to 1:1. What was the beginning of the Gospel? At least it cannot be the Jewish disciples, to whom the women did not say anything regarding resurrection or that Jesus was going to Galilee ahead of the disciples. Whatever the case is, the more chiastic parallels one finds in terms

of the whole structure of the Gospel, the nearer one gets to the intended center of the Gospel.

M. Philip Scott observes that Mark 9:7 in the transfiguration pericope (9:2–10) is almost the exact center of the entire Gospel, even referencing the numbers of the words before and after 9:7.<sup>66</sup> This approach, though I agree with the result, is too simplistic. If one wants to present a persuasive case for a chiasmus for the entire Gospel of Mark one has to first distinguish between different layers of Mark, since the parts which were added or taken out later would get in the way of detecting the originally intended chiasmus. Mark does have some passages and verses which interrupt the flow of narrative and are suspected to be insertions. For example, it does not require a thorough form critical analysis in order to detect that 9:38–41 cuts in between 9:36–37 and 9:42, both of which are about how to treat the little children (τὰ παῖδια) or the little ones (οἱ μικροί). However, it still is a very difficult task to identify all the different layers of the text of Mark, since Mark manages to form a fairly congruent narrative with the various materials available to him. Still, if one does not present a persuasive case for why some passages of Mark are not included in his or her suggested chiasmus, the argument loses its strength.

Also, when a more obvious local chiasmus partly overlaps with the suggested chiasmus and does not share its center with the suggested chiasmus, the suggestion also loses its strength. For example, Krantz's argument that the section of Jesus's first passion prediction (8:31–33) is the centerpiece of the chiasmus can be challenged by the local

---

<sup>66</sup> M. Philip Scott, "Chiastic Structure: A Key to Interpretation of Mark's Gospel," *BTB* 15.1 (1985): 24.

chiasmus which includes the section but has the transfiguration (9:2–13) as the central part. When 9:2–13 is viewed as the center, the two passion predictions (8:31–33 and 9:30–32) can be viewed as a pair, corresponding to each other. Below is the chart of this local chiasmus.

Blind man story (8:22–30)

A: The first passion prophecy and Peter's rebuke (8:31–33)

B: Following Jesus involves denying oneself and taking up one's cross (8:34–9:1)

C: Transfiguration (9:2–13)

B': Jesus's exorcism on a boy; faithless disciples; only prayer can do it (9:14–29)

A': The second passion prophecy; disciples still not understanding (9:30–32)

Blind man story (10:46–52)

This local chiasmus is placed within the encasing stories of healing of physical blindness, despite the other passages in 9:33–10:45. The similarities between A and A' in their contents and wordings are striking. In both, Jesus teaches (διδάσκειν) the disciples that the son of man (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου) will be killed (ἀποκτανθῆναι) and will be raised again (ἀναστῆναι) after three days (μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας). Although there is another passage (10:32–34), which also contains the prediction of the passion and the resurrection with similar wording, the passage lacks the element of reaction as in A by Peter (8:32b) and in A' by disciples (9:32). B and B' may seem to share not much in common, since the former is a discourse and the latter is a narrative. However, the disciples in B' function as a counterexample of a true follower of Jesus with the qualities suggested in B. In B', the disciples are described as unable to drive out the evil spirit due to their lack of faith and

prayer. Considering Jesus's acceptance of the impending death during prayer (14:35–36), Mark seems to relate prayer to self-denial. As clearly demonstrated in the scene in Gethsemane (14:32–42), the disciples are utterly unable to pray; as a result, they were not able to deny themselves and to follow Jesus (14:43–50). Also, the word γενεά, which occurs five times in Mark, was used in both B (8:38) and B' (9:19), especially in the latter to criticize the disciples as faithless (ἄπιστος), ultimately because they do not pray (9:28–29). Mark's Jesus again ties faith to prayer in 11:20–24.

These two suggested chiastic pairs (AA' and BB') encase the transfiguration scene of 9:2–13 (C), underlining the importance of the passage as the central piece of the identified local chiasmus (8:31–9:32). Not because the transfiguration scene of 9:2–13 is in almost the exact middle of the entire Gospel but because it involves a declaration of Jesus's divine sonship just as in both the scene of Jesus's baptism (1:9–11) and the scene of Jesus's death (15:37–39), I suggest that 9:2–13 is the center of the chiastic structure of the entire Gospel. Though similar to Scott's argument,<sup>67</sup> I pay more attention to the smaller chiastic structures, each of which involves several passages and presents a theme that Mark deemed significant enough to emphasize it in the chiastic manner. It is more important and practical to figure out the central themes of Mark through identifying clearer local chiasmi than to try to induce a clear-cut chiasmus for the entire Gospel.

For example, the third passion prediction (10:32–34) functions as the center of another local chiasmus that deals with the theme of following Jesus by leaving everything behind (10:17–52), where the story of the rich young man (10:17–22) and the story of

---

<sup>67</sup> Scott, "Chiastic Structure," 18.

Bartimaeus (10:46–52) correspond to each other in a contrasting manner at both ends.

Below is the chart of this local chiasmus.

- A: The rich young man who could not follow Jesus (10:17–22)
- B: The difficulty of entering the kingdom of God (10:23–27)
- C: First will be last, last will be first (10:28–31)
- D: The third passion prediction (10:32–34)
- C': James and John requesting Jesus for the right and left seats (10:35–40)
- B': Son of Man came to serve and sacrifice himself (10:41–45)
- A': Healing of Bartimaeus, who follows Jesus (10:46–52)

In 10:32, Mark underlines the fact that Jesus walks ahead of the disciples toward Jerusalem, the place in which the death of Jesus in v. 33 will take place. Bartimaeus contrasts with the rich young man in his action of following Jesus. Since the Bartimaeus story is included in this local chiasmus, the central piece of which is about the impending death and resurrection of Jesus, the destiny of Bartimaeus might be imagined and expected accordingly in this chiastic context: He might face death on the way to follow Jesus as it was indicated of a true follower of Jesus in 8:34–35. If this chiastic analysis is verified as intended by Mark, the story of the rich young man does not need a follow-up as by the Secret Gospel of Mark, since it fulfills its role as the parallel to the story of Bartimaeus in a complete local chiasmus.

The conclusion in looking into the possibility of chiasmus for the whole structure of the Gospel of Mark is that it certainly seems likely that there was a rather ambitious authorial attempt to use the literary technique of chiasmus in constructing the entire Gospel of Mark. However, even though there are multiple clear pairs of similarly



characterized passages, the central parts that can be induced from their loci are not always the same, since there are different views on the layers of the text. Mark might have intended to maintain multiple smaller chiastic structures using those pairs in order to make multiple emphatic points. In other words, Mark underlines the passages that convey his central themes by encasing them with the pairs that correspond to each other thematically or lexically. Because of this phenomenon of maintaining multiple central themes, such as the issues of Christology (9:2–13), kerygma (passion and resurrection predictions), and discipleship, readers may come up with different opinions in determining the central part of the Gospel. But, as I have argued above, the transfiguration scene (9:2–13) as the pinnacle of Mark's christological argument that Jesus is both Christ and Son of God, which is also Mark's ultimate response to the imperial propaganda of Vespasian, seems to be the centerpiece of the entire Gospel. The christological argument in this centerpiece is reinforced by the chiastic parallels that surround it, especially by the ones located in the extremes which are also directly related to the christological argument in the centerpiece: the parallel of the baptism scene (1:9–11) and the crucifixion scene (15:37–39). This literary phenomenon seems to meet Lund's fourth criterion, which suggests that in a chiastic system identical ideas which occur in the extremes occur at the center. Also, Welch's criterion which suggests that there should be an identifiable purpose and my own criterion that the purpose should be rhetorical are also met, since the identified chiastic center (9:2–13) as Mark's main argument confirms the previously discussed presupposition that Mark's rhetorical purpose was to respond to the imperial propaganda of Vespasian by presenting Jesus as the true fulfillment of the Jewish messianic prophecy and the true Son of God.

The polemic against the Jewish groups centered around the Temple cult is accentuated in the section 11:1–14:26, in which Jesus from the places near the Mount of Olives enters Jerusalem, operates in and around Jerusalem and the Temple, enacts the first Eucharist in a room in Jerusalem, and exits Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives. It might be the case that this section was also designed chiastically in its initial phase. First, the Mount of Olives, as the location from which Jesus enters Jerusalem for the first time and as the location which he returns to after coming out of Jerusalem, marks both endings of the section. “The Mount of Olives” (τὸ Ὄρος τῶν Ἐλαιῶν) appears only three times in Mark, in these two and once in the middle of the discussed section, 13:3, in which Jesus is sitting on the Mount of Olives, right after Jesus left the Temple and prophesied the destruction of the Temple (13:1–2). M. Eugene Boring relates Jesus’s leaving the Temple and sitting on the Mount of Olives to “the image of the ‘glory of Yahweh’ (the presence of God) leaving the temple and pausing on the Mount of Olives before the final departure” as in Ezekiel 10:18–19 and 11:22–23,<sup>68</sup> clarifying the authorial implication of having Jesus sitting on the Mount Olive.

Second, two similar stories are located at both ends, encasing the section. In 11:1–6 Jesus sends two of his disciples to bring the colt that Jesus rides on as he enters Jerusalem, just as in 14:12–16 Jesus sends two of his disciples to get the room where he and his disciples would have the Passover meal. M. Eugene Boring points out the similarities “in structure and in vocabulary”<sup>69</sup> between these two passages, underlining

---

<sup>68</sup> M. Eugene Boring, *Mark: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 353.

<sup>69</sup> Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 387.

“the identical wording of 11:2 / 14:13.”<sup>70</sup> Though there is another story in 6:7–13 in which Jesus sends the Twelve two by two, the purpose of sending is quite different. Despite these traces of the initial chiasmic structure, the section as a result of a heavy editing does not reveal a clear-cut chiasmus.

But it is not difficult to figure out the main point of the section, since the passage of the apocalyptic warnings (13:5–23) and the passage regarding the parousia (13:24–37) seem to be only secondary to the contents that polemicize against the Temple cult and the Jewish groups related to it. Winn suggests that Mark’s apocalyptic warnings (13:5–23) are not about the siege of Jerusalem and the Temple’s destruction but refer to the realities of tribulation that Mark’s audience were facing after the destruction of the Temple, not only based on the observation that the apocalyptic description of 13:5–23 does not fit with what actually happened in the destruction of the Temple, but also based on his dating of Mark’s composition as post-70.<sup>71</sup> If Mark 13:3–37 indeed is not about the events that led up to the destruction of the Temple but about the situations and the instructions after the destruction of the Temple, it becomes reasonable to deal with 13:3–37 separately from the rest of the section. Below is a possible chiasmic diagram of the section 11:1–14:26 excluding 13:3–37.

A: From the Mount of Olives, Jesus sends two disciples to bring the colt, on which he rides to enter Jerusalem (11:1–11); On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus being hungry curses the fruitless fig tree (11:12–14)

---

<sup>70</sup> Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 388.

<sup>71</sup> Winn, *Purpose of Mark’s Gospel*, 68–73.

B: In Jerusalem, Jesus enters the temple, cleanses the temple (11:15–16); Jesus quotes from Isaiah 56:7 and rebukes that the temple became ‘a den of robbers’ (v. 17); The withered fig tree and teachings on prayer (vv. 19–26)

C: The high priests and the scribes look for a way to kill Jesus (11:18)

D: Jesus walks in the temple and had an exchange with the high priests, scribes, and elders regarding the issue of authority (11:27–33); The Parable of the Tenants (12:1–11); They (the high priests, scribes, and elders) look for a way to arrest him (v. 12)

E: An exchange with the Pharisees and Herodians on the issue of paying tax (12:13–17)

F: An exchange with Sadducees on marriage and resurrection (12:18–27)

G: An exchange with a scribe that answers well on the greatest commandment (12:28–34)

F’: Critical comments on the messianic understanding of the scribes (12:35–37) and on how they love glory and money (vv. 38–40)

E’: Comments on rich donators and a poor widow (12:41–43)

D’: Going out of the temple, Jesus prophesies the destruction of the temple (13:1–2)

C’: Two days before the Passover, the priest and the scribes look for a way to kill Jesus (14:1–2)

B’: In Bethany, in the house of Simon the Leper, a woman anoints Jesus in preparation of his burial (14:3–9); Judas Iscariot goes to betray Jesus (vv. 10–11)

A': Jesus sends two disciples to prepare a room for the Passover meal (14:12–16); Jesus while eating utters the woe saying against the one who would betray him (vv. 17–25); Jesus and the disciples go out of Jerusalem to the Mount of Olives (v. 26)

Besides the elements of chiastic parallel mentioned before, such as the same location of the Mount of Olives and sending two disciples ahead, both A and A' has the element of cursing, which is found nowhere else in Mark. Mark has Jesus grieved with anger (3:5), amazed at unbelief (6:5), call Pharisees and scribes hypocrites (7:5), sigh deeply because of the generation that seeks a sign (8:11), warn about the Pharisees and Herodians (8:15) and scribes (12:38), and call Peter Satan (8:33), but saves cursing for the fig tree and the woe saying for Judas Iscariot. What Jesus answered to the fruitless fig tree was indeed a curse (11:14), as clarified by the word *κατηράσω* that Peter uses to describe what Jesus did to the fig tree (v. 21), while the woe saying by Jesus in 14:21 is the only woe saying in Mark besides 13:17, in which the saying is more of a concern for the weaker ones under the expected tribulation, and not of a curse. Also, as it is stated in 14:25 that Jesus will never drink of the fruit of the vine until the day when he will drink the new one in God's kingdom, it is stated in a similar structure in 11:14 that no one should eat of the fig tree forever.

In the parallel of B and B', the cleansing of the temple and the anointing of Jesus are paired, indicating that Mark might express the notion of body as the temple, which is found in Paul (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19) and is later found in the Gospel of John (Jn 2:21). C and C' demonstrate a clear parallelism, sharing a very similar wording. 11:18 has "[...] οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς [...] ἐζήτουν πῶς αὐτὸν ἀπολέσωσιν [...]," and 14:1b has

“[...] ἐζήτουν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς πῶς αὐτὸν [...] ἀποκτείνωσιν.” These two passages point to D, where the high priests, scribes, and elders are seeking (ἐζήτουν) to arrest Jesus, meeting the fourth criterion of Lund. D’ can be understood to be the passage by which Mark has Jesus explain the meaning of the Parable of the Tenants (12:1–11) in D. Also, Jesus enters the temple in D, while he exits it in D’. Regarding the parallelism between E and E’, while E concerns the secular duty of paying to the Roman empire, E’ is about the religious duty of giving to the Jewish temple. Also, while E mentions the Roman currency denarius, E’ has the Jewish lepton, revealing the intention to create a contrasting parallelism. As approaching the center of the chiasmus, both F and F’ have Jesus engaging in a halakic debate with a “superior” hermeneutical insight as the rabbi of rabbis just as Mark seems to intend to depict him to be. Finally, G as the center of the chiasmus has Jesus answer to one of the scribes regarding the most important commandment.

Unlike the other halakic discourses in Mark (2:23–28; 3:1–4; 7:1–23; 10:2–12; 12:18–27, 35–37), this conversation between the two rabbis present a mutually complementary discourse. Jesus combines Deut 6:4–5 and Lev 19:18b, thus producing a double commandment. As Evans observes, the scribe in agreement with Jesus’s answer and in response to it “combines Deut 6:4b (‘he is one’) and Deut 4:35 (‘the Lord your God, he is God and there is no other except him’) and so complements Jesus’[s] quotation of this portion of the passage,” and “Jesus’[s] appeal to Deut 6:5 and Lev 19:18” is also augmented by the scribe in v. 33.<sup>72</sup> But, just as the other halakic debates in Mark are both

---

<sup>72</sup> Craig A. Evans, *Mark 8:27-16:20*, WBC (Nashville: Word Books, 2001), 265.

assertive of Jesus's perspective and polemical against Jesus's opponents on their characteristics, such as hardness of heart (3:5; 10:5), hypocrisy (7:6), or lack of understanding (12:24, 27), this discourse is both assertive of Jesus's view and polemical, not against the questioner but against the temple establishment itself and the overall legalism that the Jewish group centered around it demonstrated, as indicated by v. 31b ("There is no greater commandment than these") and v. 33c ("[...] are more important than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices"). This view that these phrases are polemically targeting the temple cult and its adherents is supported by the very chiasmus that they belong to, which entails the passages that are explicitly polemical against the temple cult and its adherents, such as the Parable of the Tenants (12:1–11), as its indispensable components.

There seem to be at least three polemical points in this chiasmus. The first point is that it was the representatives of the temple cult that killed Jesus. This is explicitly and repeatedly suggested in 11:18; 12:12; and 14:1, and is strongly indicated in the Parable of the Tenants (12:1–11). Mark renders it unambiguous who Jesus means by the tenants by having the very target of the polemic—the high priests, the scribes, and the elders (11:27b)—become aware of the target of the parable (12:12b). Sanders observes the tendency of the canonical Gospels "to incriminate the Jews and exculpate the Romans."<sup>73</sup> He points to how the Jewish crowd is depicted as having insisted on the execution of Jesus while Pilate is depicted as having been reluctant, as in Matt. 27:15–26; Mark 15:6–

---

<sup>73</sup> E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 298.

15; Luke 23:18–23; and John 18:38.<sup>74</sup> This tendency might be seen to have been initiated by Mark and further developed by the other Gospel writers as the separation between the Christian movement and Rabbinic Judaism was taking place. However, Mark's intention does not seem to have been to incriminate all the Jews, since Mark seems to make an excuse for the Jewish crowd in 15:12, in which it is indicated that the crowd was stirred up *by the high priests* to ask Pilate to release Barabbas instead of Jesus. Mark's polemic regarding the Jews is focused on and limited to certain groups of Jewish religious leaders who represented the temple cult, since even some of the Jewish religious leaders are depicted positively (5:21–43; 12:28–34; 15:42–46), not to mention Jesus's Jewish followers who are excluded from the religious leadership.

The second point is that the reason for the destruction of the temple is because the representatives of the temple cult killed Jesus (the first point). The Parable of the Tenants (12:1–11) surely involves a discourse on the cause of the destruction of the Second Temple. And when a cause for an event is discussed, it is likely that the discourse is a retrospective evaluation of the event, just as some of the *vaticinia ex eventu* in the Hebrew Bible (ex. Jer 5:18–19) are. Sanders understands that Jesus's utterance of the Parable of the Tenants is depicted in the Synoptic Gospels to have “inspired plots against Jesus.”<sup>75</sup> Mark's intention, however, is not to suggest that the utterance of the parable caused the plot to kill Jesus, since the plot had existed prior to the utterance of the parable (Mark 3:6; 11:18) and the death of Jesus had been foretold by Jesus several times already

---

<sup>74</sup> Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 298.

<sup>75</sup> Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 298.



(Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34), reducing the plot to merely an expected part of the fulfillment of Jesus's prophecy of his own destiny. Therefore, the Parable of the Tenants (12:1–11) can hardly be seen as a direct cause of the plot but should be seen as Mark's summary of his polemic against the temple and its adherents. This is intended to provide an explanation for the destroyed temple and to suggest the representatives of the temple cult, who nearly disappeared along with the temple, as a safe target to blame for the death of Jesus.

The third point relates to the main subject of this dissertation: The disciples were no better. The polemic against the Jewish disciples is not so conspicuous in this chiasmus but still interwoven in it through the character of Judas Iscariot, as he goes to the high priests to betray Jesus (14:10) and becomes the subject of Jesus's woe saying (14:21b). The character of Judas Iscariot, as a good example of Mark's biculturalism, might remind the audience of two characters, one Jewish and the other Roman. The Jewish one is Judah in Genesis, as previously mentioned, and the other is Brutus, who was widely known as the betrayer of Julius Caesar. Dante has Brutus and Judas, along with Cassius, put together in the mouths of Lucifer, having appreciated the obvious similarity between them (*Inf.* 34.51–64). One of the popular explanations for the epithet of Judas is that it is “a Hebrew or Aramaic version of Latin *sicarius*, meaning ‘robber’ or ‘assassin,’ from the word *sica*, meaning ‘dagger.’”<sup>76</sup> Peter Stanford discards this suggestion because it is anachronistic to relate Judas to the *Sicarii*, a Jewish resistant group whose heyday

---

<sup>76</sup> Joan E. Taylor, “The Name ‘Iskarioth’ (Iscariot),” *JBL* 129.2 (2010): 369.

“postdates the gospel versions of Judas’[s] death in 33 CE.”<sup>77</sup> However, Mark seems to have written his Gospel after the *Sicarii* emerged as a group in Jerusalem “during the 50s,”<sup>78</sup> allowing the possibility that Mark has characterized Judas as a man with a dagger hidden “under their garments” (Josephus, *B.J.* 2.13.3 [Whiston]).<sup>79</sup>

Brutus also had been known to have carried a dagger, “which none but his wife knew of” (Plutarch, *Brut.* 14 [Dryden]),<sup>80</sup> when he went out to stab Julius Caesar. The earliest written account of the assassination of Caesar is found in the *Life of Augustus*, written around 14 CE by Nicolaus of Damascus. According to Nicolaus, there were multiple omens that warned Caesar not to go to the Senate Room (*Vit. Caes.* 23).<sup>81</sup> Especially, right before entering the Senate Room, Caesar sacrificed multiple animals in order to gain a more auspicious omen, only to find out that the signs from the gods were nothing but ominous. But Brutus, “though he was at that time thought to be one of his [Caesar’s] most intimate friends” (“ἐν δὲ τοῖς μάλιστα φίλοις τότε νομιζόμενος,” 23 [Hall]), approached him; persuaded him; and took him by the hand to lead him to the Senate Room, where the men with daggers were waiting for him (24). Nicolaus ascribes

---

<sup>77</sup> Peter Stanford, *Judas: The Most Hated Name in History* (Berkeley: Counterpoint, 2015), 26.

<sup>78</sup> Richard A. Horsley, “The Sicarii: Ancient Jewish ‘Terrorists,’” *JR* 59.4 (1979): 436.

<sup>79</sup> Flavius Josephus, *The War of the Jews*, trans. William Whiston (Digireads.com Publishing, 2010).

<sup>80</sup> Plutarch, *Plutarch’s Lives. The Translation Called Dryden’s* (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1906), 316, <https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/1775>.

<sup>81</sup> Nicolaus of Damascus, *Life of Augustus*, trans. Clayton M. Hall, 1923, <https://www.csun.edu/~hcfl004/nicolaus.html>.

this death, which could have been prevented, to the superior power of Moira, the goddess of fate, saying, “[...] Fate [Moira] becomes a still stronger force if indeed one acknowledges her part in these things [...]” (23 [Hall]).

Mark’s Jesus, instead of sacrificing multiple animals for auguries from the gods, prayed to his Abba Father multiple times in order to avoid the cup, which in many biblical passages (e.g. Ps 16:5; Jer 49:12; Ezek 23:31–33) symbolizes “fate” (cf. Nicolaus’ reference to Moira) according to Bruce J. Malina,<sup>82</sup> only to accept the cup. And Judas the dagger man, brings with him a crowd with swords (μάχαιρα) and clubs, and says that he will kiss Jesus as a sign to capture him (Mark 14:43–44). The verb used here is φιλέω (I love, kiss), which has the same cognate as the word “friend” (φίλος), which Brutus was to Caesar. The verb φιλέω is intensified by the prefix κατά as Judas actually kisses Jesus (v. 45), just as φίλος is given the superlative sense by μάλιστα in describing Brutus. If indeed the character of Judas was created to remind the audience of the character of Brutus, it contributes to Mark’s literary scheme to apotheosize Jesus *post mortem*, just as Julius Caesar was divinized after death.

Another thing that Mark attaches to Judas besides the problematic epithet “Iscariot” is “one of the Twelve” (14:10, 43). Although Judas is distinguished from one of Jesus’s brothers named Judas (6:3) by the epithet, Judas is also called “ὁ εἰς τῶν δώδεκα” in 14:10. It is noted that the definite article is added here unlike the other instance (v. 43), perhaps to make a backreference to “one of the Twelve” in 14:20. Still in

---

<sup>82</sup> Dennis C. Duling et al., *Handbook of Biblical Social Values*, ed. John J. Pilch and Bruce J. Malina, 3rd ed. (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2016), 68.

14:43, though the audience already knows who is meant by Judas, Mark still adds “one of the Twelve.” The immediate effect of this emphatic redundancy is to remind the audience of what group Judas belongs to. This might have been Mark’s crude attempt at metonymy. While Judas is accused of betrayal, the rest of the Twelve, represented by Peter, are accused of cowardice. By associating Judas with the representatives of the temple cult and at the same time associating Judas with the rest of the Twelve by the epithet “one of the Twelve,” Mark expands his polemic and ultimately targets the Jewish-Christian group that Mark’s audience might have had contentions with. This polemic permeates the entire Gospel, subtle at first but clearer toward the end.

### 3.8. Conclusion

Based on the view that Mark is a narrative rhetoric, I have attempted to present Mark’s primary rhetorical point through an overview of Mark. I have looked at both the historical settings in which Mark wrote and the supposed chiastic scheme according to which Mark wrote. I have observed that there are the two major polemics in Mark: one against Vespasian’s imperial propaganda and the other against the representative of the Jewish Temple cult. In order for anyone to come up with a fully developed Christian literary response to the widespread imperial propaganda of Vespasian, the date has to be after 70 CE; also, considering the intra-Jewish halakic debates which would happen not too far from Jerusalem, Mark is expected to have been affected both by the imperial propaganda and Jewish sectarianism in attaining the materials for his polemics. Therefore

I have suggested that Mark wrote after 70 CE in Rome with the materials that he collected in the northern Syria close to Asia Minor.

To verify the preliminary observations regarding Mark's two primary polemics, I have examined the entire structure of Mark and demonstrated that Mark's chiastic center is 9:2–13, in which Mark presents his high Christology. Also, by demonstrating that Mark closely associates the Jewish religious figures and the Jewish disciple group in the section of 11:1–14:26 through the local chiasmus found in the section, I have suggested that the polemic that seems to have been directed against the Temple cult and its representative is redirected against the Jewish disciples. This hypothesis that Mark's polemic against the Jewish sects is ultimately redirected against the Jewish disciples is an essential part of the logic of this dissertation and will be fully explored in the next chapter.

As indicated in Mark 9:2–13, Mark's primary rhetorical point seems to be of Christology. Even though the Church had a high Christology from the early stages of its development, such as the one embedded in the Christ hymn of Phil 2:5–11, some Jewish believers in Jerusalem held a low Christology, in which the divine aspect of Jesus was not accepted. When faced with Vespasian's imperial propaganda, which was supported by Josephus's interpretation of Num 24:17, Mark knew that the kind of Christology held by the Jewish-Christian community in Jerusalem would not prevail against Vespasian's public images. While Mark's personal belief in Jesus as Son of God has been faithfully reflected in his christological presentation, the need to counterargue the imperial propaganda without a hindrance from within the Church might have prompted Mark to reject the low Christology held by the Jewish-Christian community in Jerusalem by

undermining the apostolic authority that they claimed to have. Peter, as the figure whom Mark uses to metonymically denigrate the Jewish-Christian group (which must have claimed to be represented by Peter and other renowned apostles in Jerusalem), is said to have confessed Jesus as Messiah (8:29) and immediately was rebuked for the lack of understanding the implications that accompany the term (8:33). On the other hand, Mark has God (1:11), a Roman centurion (15:39), unnamed or marginalized followers of Jesus (10:46–47; 14:3–9), and even unclean spirits (3:11), proclaim and confess according to his Christology, which involves Jesus's death and resurrection as God's Son. This is high enough to compete with Vespasian's messianic images and to prevail. If this assessment is right, Mark truly came up with a rhetorical point like a double-edged sword (cf. Heb 4:12), by which he dealt with both an intra-ecclesiastical contention with a Jewish-Christian community and an extra-ecclesiastical challenge by the imperial cult of Vespasian.

## CHAPTER FOUR: MARK'S GRAND SCHEME AGAINST THE JEWISH DISCIPLES

### 4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will look into how Mark develops a polemic against the Jewish disciples throughout his Gospel. I will make a few points. First, the polemic against the disciples which is developed and maintained throughout the Gospel is clearly Markan. Second, some Q passages are employed by Mark but redacted for the purpose of creating the polemic against the Jewish disciples. Third, Mark employs the figures who display the commendable traits, which are in contrast to the reprehensible traits of the disciples, in order to amplify the effect of the polemic. Fourth, Mark likens the Jewish disciples to the Pharisees, who are criticized in the text that belonged to the Jewish-Christian community which claimed to be represented by the Jewish disciples. By showing that Mark initiates and develops the polemic against the disciples throughout the Gospel, and never attempts to restore their tarnished reputation as the later authors do, my suggestion that the Pharisees and some scribes in Mark 7:1–13 are the caricature of certain members of the Jewish-Christian community that Mark contended with will gain more contextual ground. Lastly, I will suggest that Pauline theology was behind Mark as the force that enabled him to polemicize against the esteemed Jewish disciples.

### 4.2. Q and Markan Redaction

Just as Mark uses the language of the imperial cult to present Jesus as the Messiah promised in the Jewish Scripture against the imperial propaganda's claim that Vespasian

was the Messiah that the Jewish Scripture prophesied about, Mark uses the text that belonged to a Jewish-Christian group, which is identified as Q, to create a polemic against the group. Did Mark really know Q? If so, how does he use it? Did he really intend to use Q against the community that had Q as their primary religious text? Harry T. Fleddermann, after analyzing the twenty eight overlap texts of Mark and Q (Mark 1:2, 7–8; 3:22–27, 28–30; 4:21, 22, 24cd, 25, 30–32; 6:7–13; 8:11–13, 34b, 35, 38; 9:37, 40, 42 and 14:21; 9:50a; 10:11–12, 31; 11:22–23, 24; 12:38–39; 13:11, 12, 21, 31, 35), concludes that “Mark knew and used Q,”<sup>1</sup> arguing that “everywhere in the overlap texts Mark is secondary to Q”<sup>2</sup> and that “the differences between Mark and Q in the overlap texts stem from Markan redaction.”<sup>3</sup> Fleddermann skillfully induces the Q passages, based on the parallel passages between Matthew and Luke, then compares each of the induced Q passages with each of their corresponding Markan passages, thus demonstrating Mark’s redactional traits, which point to the logical conclusion that Mark is secondary to and dependent on Q.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Harry T. Fleddermann, *Mark and Q: A Study of the Overlap Texts* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1995), 214.

<sup>2</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 207.

<sup>3</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 213.

<sup>4</sup> These three steps are the methodology that Fleddermann uses throughout the book to prove a Markan text that supposedly overlaps with the corresponding Q passages is secondary to and redactional of the corresponding Q passage. Those who would not take this careful methodology as valid have another option of looking into the doublets in Matthew and Luke which point to Q and Mark as their two separate sources. Matthew and Luke often seem to have seen the passages in Mark, which are similar to but still are different from the passages in Q, and decided to preserve both. There are fifteen Matthean doublets, one set of which seem to have derived from Mark (Matt. 4:17b; 13:12; 16:4, 24, 25, 27; 18:5, 8-9; 19:9; 20:26; 21:21, 22; 24:14, 9b and 13, 35); and thirteen Lukan doublets, one set of which point to their source as Mark (Luke 8:16, 17,



According to Fleddermann, Mark's redactional traits include the narrative contextualization of more general discourses, "the tendency to tone down extreme statements,"<sup>5</sup> adaptation of the Jewish elements "to the changed circumstances of the gentile mission,"<sup>6</sup> and insertion of certain terms that anticipate other related narrative passages.<sup>7</sup> Considering that these traits presuppose that Markan redaction includes omission, alteration, insertion, and creation, Mark's primary motivation for writing his Gospel cannot have been to preserve the sayings tradition as is, but to make use of the given material for the sake of presenting his own view.<sup>8</sup> In short, Mark with a rhetorical purpose reworked his source Q through narrativization, intentional omission/insertion/creation, and theological/cultural adjustments.

---

18; 9:1-5, 23, 24, 26, 48, 50; 20:46; 21:12-15, 16, 33), sharing six Markan passages as the common source (Mark 4:25; 8:34, 35, 38; 9:37; 13:31). For example, Matt 10:38 (καὶ ὃς οὐ λαμβάνει τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκολουθεῖ ὀπίσω μου οὐκ ἔστιν μου ἄξιος) and Luke 14:27 (ὅστις οὐ βαστάζει τὸν σταυρὸν ἑαυτοῦ καὶ ἔρχεται ὀπίσω μου οὐ δύναται εἶναί μου μαθητής) share lexical elements enough to induce a Q passage, but Both Matthew and Luke have a doublet (Matt 16:24 and Luke 9:23), which points to Mark 8:34 which is similar to its equivalent in Q but different enough to create the need for Matthew and Luke to preserve it separately. Though the differences between each pair of the doublets must have been the reason why Matthew and Luke preserved both, the similarities make it likely that Mark knew Q.

<sup>5</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 122.

<sup>6</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 173.

<sup>7</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 138.

<sup>8</sup> There are chunks of Q that Mark omits. A reasonable opinion would be that Mark might have avoided using the parts of Q that looked irrelevant to his rhetorical goals and have chosen only the materials deemed relevant to his purpose and redactable in composing his rhetoric.

Then, what was Mark's rhetorical purpose in redacting Q? Clement Grene observes in Mark that "Peter, and by extension the other disciples, is portrayed as a graceless, bumbling buffoon, a student who repeatedly fails to understand his master, and who boasts of his loyalty but fails disastrously when it is put to the test."<sup>9</sup> One thing that is clear about Q is that it does not have the element of criticizing the disciples. It criticizes the Pharisees and the scribes through the series of woe sayings (Q 11?:39a?, 42, 41, 43–44; 11:46b, 52, and 47–48),<sup>10</sup> but not the disciples. Thus, any redactional element in Mark that is critical of the disciples must be Markan, and should illuminate Mark's rhetorical purpose.

#### 4.3. Jewish Disciples in Contrast and in Comparison

Among the few arcs in Mark, the arc of the Jewish disciples is easily recognized and can be extracted as a linear narrative. Major passages involving the disciples will be examined sequentially to see if Mark actually develops a polemic against the disciples and redacts some Q passages for the sake of the polemic and if he presents other figures who are contrasted or compared with the disciples to intensify the polemic.

At the outset, Mark has Jesus assemble his twelve Jewish apostles as a group distinguished from the rest of the disciples, thus demarcating the target of the future

---

<sup>9</sup> Clement Grene, "Cowardice, Betrayal and Discipleship: Peter and Judas in the Gospels" (University of Edinburgh, 2016), 103.

<sup>10</sup> James M. Robinson, John S. Kloppenborg, and Paul Hoffmann, eds., *The Sayings Gospel of Q in Greek and English with Parallels from the Gospels of Mark and Thomas* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 113–14.

polemic. Simon, Andrew, James, and John are called by Jesus and begin to follow Jesus in 1:14–20. MacDonald argues that his hypothesized Q passage, which became Matt 8:19–22, provided an antetext for Mark 1:14–20.<sup>11</sup> If so, Mark 1:14–20 becomes a good example of how Mark contextualized a Q saying by turning it into a narrative, in this case, animating Q’s general instruction of how to follow Jesus by adding the specific illustration how the first four disciples actually followed Jesus.

Jesus heals Simon’s mother-in-law (1:29–31). Simon along with those with him hunts down (καταδιώκω) Jesus while he is praying (1:35–39). David E. Malick finds a contrast between these two narratives based on performance criticism.<sup>12</sup> He argues that the service of Simon’s mother-in-law after the healing reminds the audience of the service of the angels (1:13) and “adumbrates the major theme of ‘service’ in Mark,”<sup>13</sup> while Simon is said to hunt down Jesus, which can be viewed as hostile, and the words that he says “appear to be a rebuke, or correction, of Jesus for secluding himself.”<sup>14</sup> This first unnamed woman disciple, because she is closely related with Simon, creates an inevitable link with Simon. Also, because of this close link, the audience cannot avoid noticing the contrast between the two. This, as the first instance where a disciple or the disciple group is contrasted with a figure or figures that demonstrate a commendable characteristic, inaugurates the upcoming series of contrast. At any rate, one important fact

---

<sup>11</sup> MacDonald, *Two Shipwrecked Gospels*, 136.

<sup>12</sup> David E. Malick, “Simon’s Mother-in-Law as a Minor Character in the Gospel of Mark: A Narrative Analysis,” *Priscilla Pap.* 31.2 (2017): 4–9.

<sup>13</sup> Malick, “Simon’s Mother-in-Law,” 5–6.

<sup>14</sup> Malick, “Simon’s Mother-in-Law,” 5.

that should not be unnoticed in these first three scenes involving disciples—calling the first four disciples (1:14–20), setting an example of service through Simon’s mother-in-law (1:29–31), and the first instance of conflict between the disciples and Jesus (1:35–39)—is that Simon surfaces as the representative of the four first disciples from Galilee.

The epithet “Κανααῖον” for the second Simon in the list of the Twelve (3:18d) should not be understood to mean that he is Canaanite, but that he is one of the Zealots, as is understood by Luke (Acts 1:13d).<sup>15</sup> It is possible that Mark meant to present the Twelve as symbolic representative of the twelve tribes of Israel, just as MacDonald’s Q uses Deut 10:3b and 1:23b–24 as the antetext for the scene of appointing the Twelve as apostles.<sup>16</sup> None of the Twelve can be gentile as they are introduced by Mark as Jewish, though Galilean. Judas Iscariot, introduced as “the very one who betrayed” Jesus (3:19), completes the roster, thus demarcating the target of the upcoming polemic: the Jewish disciple group represented by Peter, but with a betrayer among them.

After demarcating the central target of polemic as the Twelve, Mark provides the primary ground of polemic: the lack of faith and understanding. After sharing the Parable of the Sower (4:1–9), Jesus explains the meaning of the parable only to the Twelve along with others who are with Jesus, thus making them insiders (4:10–12). At the same time, the disciples and the Twelve are criticized for their lack of ability to understand the parable (4:13). Then when Jesus calms the storm (4:35–41), the disciples are rebuked by

---

<sup>15</sup> James Strong, *Strong’s Expanded Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009), s.v. “Κανααῖος.”

<sup>16</sup> MacDonald, *Two Shipwrecked Gospels*, 211.

Jesus for the lack of faith (4:40), and Mark underlines their failure to understand who Jesus is (4:41). Despite being informed of the mystery of God's kingdom as the insiders, the disciples do not possess faith and understanding. The polemical point on the disciples' utter lack of faith and understanding is clearly initiated and developed in this sequence and serves as the ground for the next, more acrimonious, polemical point that the disciples are not different from the Jewish sects whom Mark blames for the death of Jesus.

Among the Twelve, three are chosen to come with Jesus into the house of the synagogue ruler Jairus, to witness the resurrection of Jairus's daughter (5:35–43). The three chosen ones are Peter, James, and John. This triumvirate is established by reappearing in the transfiguration scene (9:2) and in Jesus's prayer scene in Gethsemane (14:33), not so much as the pillars (στυλοί) as in Gal 2:9 but as the narrowed-down target of polemic, as they are clueless of the meaning of the transfiguration (9:6, 10) and are sleeping while Jesus agonizes in prayer (14:37, 40). The polemic against them expands dramatically as Mark characterizes James and John as the worldly ambitious brothers (10:35–45) and Peter as the first apostate (14:66–72). It seems that grouping these three was initiated by Mark and inherited by Matthew and Luke. Mark might have alluded to Gal 2:9 when he came up with his infamous triumvirate. Though Mark is clearly aware of Jesus's younger brother James (6:3; 15:40; 16:1) and that Paul might have meant Jesus's brother when referring to James in Gal 2:9, Mark still uses the three names previously grouped by Paul as the representatives of the group that he intends to contend with. Although I agree with the scholarly opinion that James in Gal 1:19 and James in Gal 2:9

are the same person,<sup>17</sup> it is still possible that Mark got the idea of presenting the triumvirate as such from Paul's satirical presentation of the three names (Gal 2:6, 9; cf. 2 Cor 11:5). As the representatives of the Twelve, the triumvirate makes it easier for Mark to form a polemic against the Twelve in the form of narrative, in which individual characters are needed to be named and to act to demonstrate certain characteristics, which become the ground for the audience's judgment.

The long narrative regarding the arrest, death, and burial of John the Baptist (6:14–29) is inserted between the passage in which the disciples are sent two by two to minister in the villages (6:6b–13) and the passage in which they come back and report their work to Jesus (6:30–31). S. Anthony Cummins tries to provide a better assessment of Mark 6:17–29 but ends up focusing on correlating between “Herod's misrule and the emerging empire being heralded by John and established by Jesus.”<sup>18</sup> This approach falls short of explicating his own observation that this passage and “the preceding transitional passage (6.14–16) are strategically intercalated between Jesus's sending and the subsequent return of the disciples on their first mission (6.6b–13; 30–31).”<sup>19</sup> Through the two encasing passages the Twelve undeniably surface as the representatives of Jesus. They are given the authority by Jesus to do what Jesus does, and when they come back they are called “apostles” (6:30a), which Mark never calls the Twelve elsewhere except the disputed case of 3:14. With great title comes great responsibility. As the sequence of

---

<sup>17</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, WBC (Nashville: Word Books, 1990), 56.

<sup>18</sup> Darrell Bock et al., *The Gospel of Mark*, ed. Thomas R. Hatina, Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels (London: T&T Clark International, 2006), 47.

<sup>19</sup> Bock et al., *The Gospel of Mark*, 36.

the events regarding John the Baptist parallels the sequence of the events of Jesus's passion narrative, what John's disciples do (6:29) makes the audience expect Jesus's disciples to do what they are supposed to do when they face the same situation: a proper burial of their master. The exemplary image of carrying out the least duty as someone's disciples has been provided only to be contrasted with what Jesus's disciples do later: to fail to bury their master. And someone called "the best disciple" (Arimathea) does the job instead (15:43–46). This is another good example of how Mark uses contrast in denigrating the Jewish disciples.

The disciples are not just contrasted with the more exemplary disciple figures but also are likened to Jesus's opponents, the Pharisees, in comparison. Mark seems aware of the set of woe sayings in Q 11:39–52, which are directed against the Pharisees and the scribes. The set of woe sayings must have stood out to Mark due to the sheer number of the sayings. However, instead of preserving the woe sayings as they are, Mark saves the expression and uses it against one of the Twelve—Judas Iscariot. This indicates that Mark's true polemical target is not the Pharisees. If it was, the woe sayings would have remained against the Pharisees and have not become redirected against Judas Iscariot. Also, Mark uses the motif of the heart's quality to compare the Pharisees and the Jewish disciple group. The author of 1 Timothy states that "the purpose of the [Christian] teaching is love from pure heart and good conscience and sincere faith" (1 Tim 1:5). Though later than the undisputed Pauline epistles, the statement inherited and preserves the important Pauline motif of the heart's quality. From the earliest epistle (1 Thessalonians) to his last (Romans), Paul emphasizes the importance of the heart's right condition. The hearts of the believers are examined by God (1 Thess 2:4), should be kept

blameless in holiness (3:13), received the Spirit of God's son (Gal 4:6), would be guarded by God's peace (Phil 4:7), will be revealed of their motives and secrets (1 Cor 4:5; 14:25), and received the circumcision by the Spirit (Rom 2:29). Although it seems that Q does not contain the Matthean beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart" (Matt 5:8), Q still emphasizes the importance of the quality of the inside by criticizing the Pharisees for purifying only the outside of the cup while the inside is "full of plunder and dissipation" (Q 11:39b) and suggesting to clean the inside rather than the outside (Q 11:41), revealing the continuity of the notion between Jesus and Paul. One of the presuppositions that I maintain is that Mark had been influenced by Pauline tradition, and the motif of the heart's quality used by Mark does not testify against the presupposition.

Mark first criticizes the Pharisees for the hardness (*πώρωσις*) of their hearts (3:5); then applies the same criticism against Jesus's disciples twice (6:52; 8:17), with the quote from Isaiah, "their heart is far (*πόρρω*) away," between the two (7:6); and wraps up the use of the polemical language of heart by redirecting the polemic against the Pharisees (10:5). Though the quote from Isaiah (7:6) is directed against the Pharisees and the scribes, the seemingly chiastic occurrences of the same polemical language encasing the quote makes one wonder if the quote from Isaiah was meant only for the Pharisees and the scribes. In other words, 7:1–13 as the passage in the middle of which the quote is situated needs to be viewed with the fact that the passage is located between the chiastically occurring polemics against the Jewish disciples and not against the Pharisees. A possible chiastic structure centering around the polemical language of heart can be suggested as below:

A: The polemical language of heart directed against the Pharisees (3:5)



B: The polemical language of heart directed against the disciples (6:52)

C: The biblical basis (Isa 29:13) of the polemical language of heart  
(7:6c)

B': The polemical language of heart directed against the disciples again  
(8:17c)

A': The polemical language of heart directed back against the Pharisees (10:5)

A (3:5) functions as the introduction of the polemical language while B (6:52) and B' (8:17c) reveal the true purpose of the polemical language. C (7:6c) is a hidden polemic directed against the Jewish Christian community contemporary with Mark. A' (10:5) wraps up the chiasm by corresponding to A (3:5). 8:11–21 as the passage that contains B (6:52) begins with an explicit polemic against the Pharisees (vv. 11–13), which Mark borrows from Q (Matt 12:38–42 par. 11:16, 29–32), but makes a smooth transition of the target of polemic by utilizing the motif of “the yeast of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod” (vv. 14–15) and ultimately aims at the disciples even with a clear allusion to Isaiah 6:9 (v. 18), which Mark quotes earlier in 4:12 regarding “those outsiders” (4:11b). Weeden suggests that “Mark 4:11–12 was a part of the Markan opponents’ tradition” which Mark used “to set the stage for the denigration of the disciples”<sup>20</sup> (v. 13). If the quote from Isaiah 6:9 indeed originally belonged to Weeden’s hypothetical opponents of Mark, Mark uses the quote right back against them not only in 4:11–13 but also again in 8:17–18. In both cases the inability to see and to hear is associated with the disciples’ inability to understand. MacDonald’s inclusion of Matthew’s version of Mark 4:1–12 (Matt 13:3–13) in his version of Q seems to agree with Weeden’s hypothesis regarding

---

<sup>20</sup> Theodore J. Weeden, *Mark: Traditions in Conflict* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 149n17.

the tradition that belonged to Mark's opponents, whether Weeden meant Q by it or not.<sup>21</sup> Considering that Matthew quotes Isaiah more frequently than Mark and sometimes independently from Mark (Matt 1:23; 4:15; 8:17; 12:18, 21), it is not entirely baseless to conjecture that quoting Isaiah in Mark was not original of Mark but was inherited and emulated (e.g. 9:48; 11:17). It is important to hold onto this conjecture to further source-critically analyze Mark 7:1–23, the passage in question, since it contains Isaiah 29:13 (vv. 6b–7).

Frank J. Matera, after reviewing the series of events where the disciples misunderstood Jesus, points to the “narrative problem” that Peter's confession in Mark 8:29 presents, asking, “How can Peter confess that Jesus is the Messiah when he and the other disciples have not been able to comprehend the significance of the feeding miracles? What allows the disciples to recognize what they have not been able to comprehend thus far?”<sup>22</sup> Matera tries to explain away this narrative problem by interpreting the passage regarding the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida (8:22–26) as Mark's indication that the disciples' “eyes have been opened.”<sup>23</sup> Matera lays out the structural similarities between 8:22–26 and 8:27–30. According to Matera, both begin with Jesus's question and have a two-step progression, since in the former the blind man “sees imperfectly” first but “sees clearly” later, just as in the latter “disciples report

---

<sup>21</sup> MacDonald, *Two Shipwrecked Gospels*, 113–15.

<sup>22</sup> Frank J. Matera, “The Incomprehension of the Disciples and Peter's Confession (Mark 6,14-8,30),” *Biblica* 70.2 (1989): 165.

<sup>23</sup> Matera, “Incomprehension of the Disciples,” 169.

imperfect opinions” first and “Peter correctly identifies Jesus as the Messiah” later.<sup>24</sup>

Also, “both stories conclude with a command of secrecy.”<sup>25</sup>

Matera recognizes the weakness of this analysis, acknowledging that “in the account of Peter’s confession there is nothing corresponding to Jesus laying his hands on the blind man’s eyes.”<sup>26</sup> But he still suggests that something “not explicitly identified in the text,” “which corresponds to Jesus laying his hands on the eyes of the blind man,” “has happened between step one and step two at Caesarea Philippi” and removed “the disciples’ hardness of heart.”<sup>27</sup> Despite the innate weakness, considering Mark’s recurring “paradigmatic use” of healing stories,<sup>28</sup> Matera’s argument should not be dismissed as far-fetched. It must be accepted that Peter’s confession was a correct one, though Mark’s Jesus does not compliment Peter as Matthew’s does. It is not in and of itself a polemic against Peter, though the polemic against the disciples continued thus far. It is, however, not an encomium either, since, if Matera is right, the disciples are still likened to a blind man, whose eyes were just opened by Jesus. Also, the polemic against the disciples continues after it in a more dramatic and defamatory fashion, beginning in the very next passage where Peter is called “Satan” (8:33).

---

<sup>24</sup> Matera, “Incomprehension of the Disciples,” 170.

<sup>25</sup> Matera, “Incomprehension of the Disciples,” 170.

<sup>26</sup> Matera, “Incomprehension of the Disciples,” 170.

<sup>27</sup> Matera, “Incomprehension of the Disciples,” 170.

<sup>28</sup> Matera, “Incomprehension of the Disciples,” 171.

The passage of Peter's confession of Messiah (8:27–30) might have been the result of Mark's handling the received tradition in which Peter plays a positive role. But the audience from the outset was introduced to the identity of Jesus as both Messiah and God's Son. Confessing Jesus as Messiah is merely half the job from the perspective of the audience. Though Peter is not explicitly polemicized in the passage, the audience knows that Peter did not do a complete job. Then the audience becomes convinced of their assessment when Peter is rebuked by Jesus right after the confession. The redactions that Matthew and Luke made to the Markan passage reveal their assessment that Mark's version needed mending: To Mark's "Messiah," Matthew adds "Son of God" (Matt 16:16), while Luke adds "God's" (Luke 9:20).

Due to the previously given christological statement that Jesus is both Messiah and God's Son (Mark 1:1), the passage of Peter's confession of Messiah (8:27–30) becomes Mark's rather critical report on Peter's limited scope of christological understanding. Peter's confession scene immediately functions as the stage for the upcoming invective in which Jesus rebukes Peter for thinking "not of the things of God but of the things of humans" (8:33b). In Mark, God is contrasted with humans in terms of having the power to save (10:27), and heaven as a synonym for God is contrasted with humans in terms of it being the origin of John's baptism, which may legitimize it (11:32). Here in 8:33 also, the things of God and the things of humans are in clear contrast. What "the things of God" correspond to in the context of 8:31–33 is clear in v. 31: the passion and resurrection of Jesus. Mark seems to suggest that the validity of Peter's confession of Jesus as Christ (v. 29b) has been compromised because of Peter's "human" expectations regarding Christ, as expressed in Peter's rebuke of Jesus (v. 32), perhaps in rejection of

his master's plan. According to Evans, "the messianism current in the time of Jesus" can be assessed in the Dead Sea Scrolls, of which most references to the Messiah (e.g., CD 19.10–11; 4Q252 [= 4QCommGen A] 1 V, 3–4; 4Q285 [= 4QM<sup>s</sup>] 5 I, 1–6) "presuppose a military leader who will defeat Israel's enemies."<sup>29</sup> Mark by having Jesus call Peter "Satan" and rebuke him for thinking only "the things of human" seems to criticize the popular expectation of a military Messiah among Jews, which continued even after the fall of Jerusalem. If Peter's confession of Jesus as Christ has been suggested to implicate this kind of expectation, "Jesus'[s] command to secrecy makes perfect sense."<sup>30</sup>

Regarding Mark 8:34b ("εἴ τις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἀκολουθεῖν ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἁράτω τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκολουθεῖτω μοι"), Fleddermann argues that Mark redacted Q 14:27 ("ὃς οὐ λαμβάνει τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκολουθεῖ ὀπίσω μου").<sup>31</sup> While Mark retains from this Q saying the two major notions of taking up one's own cross and following Jesus as the costs of discipleship, Mark adds to them the notion of denying oneself by introducing the verb ἀπαρνέομαι. Fleddermann observes that the verb is "an interpretive addition of Mark," which "comes from the denial sequence of Mark's narrative where Peter denies Jesus,"<sup>32</sup> arguing that "Mark sets up a contrast between denying oneself and denying Jesus"<sup>33</sup> by the verb. Indeed, after introducing the verb in

---

<sup>29</sup> Evans, *Mark 8:27-16:20*, 15.

<sup>30</sup> Evans, *Mark 8:27-16:20*, 15.

<sup>31</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 137–38.

<sup>32</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 140.

<sup>33</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 141.

his redaction of the Q saying, Mark uses this verb solely in the story of Peter’s denial of Jesus (14:30; 31; 72), where Peter ultimately denies Jesus instead of denying himself. Fleddermann also connects Mark’s employment of the verb αἶρω in the place of Q’s λαμβάνει with “the episode of Simon of Cyrene”<sup>34</sup> (Mark 15:21), the only other place where the verb αἶρω is associated with “his cross.” This agrees with my earlier suggestion in the second chapter of this dissertation that Simon in Mark 1:16–18 and Simon of Cyrene in 15:21 correspond to each other in contrast chiastically while pointing to 8:34b as another proof of chiasmus. Mark’s insertion of the verb ἀπαρνέομαι functions as a terminological platform for the upcoming narrative polemic against Peter, and the change of Q’s λαμβάνει into ἀράτω prepares the stage for the figure that will intensify the polemic against Peter more by being in contrast to Peter. The intended connection between the maxim (8:24b) and its narrativized example (15:21) and counterexample (14:72) is clarified through these terminological links that Mark devised.

#### 4.4. Bartimaeus as a Paradigmatic Figure of Discipleship

While Simon of Cyrene functions as the narrativized example of the second part of the Markan maxim (8:24b) of how to become a true follower of Jesus (“ἀράτω τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ”) and also as a rhetorical device that creates a contrasting effect in the audience’s perception of Peter, the first condition that is “ἀπαρνησάσθω ἑαυτὸν” is exemplified by another figure: Bartimaeus. We already saw how Peter is the

---

<sup>34</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 141.

counterexample of the entire maxim: He did not deny himself nor take up his cross. Even though he might have wanted to follow Jesus, just as the conditional clause of Mark 8:24b has: “εἴ τις θέλει ὀπίσω μου ἀκολουθεῖν,” his following would not qualify as instructed because he did not meet the two conditions. Indeed, Peter wanted to follow the arrested Jesus and actually followed him, but “from afar” (14:54). Another curious case of following Jesus is mentioned just three verses prior to Peter’s. Mark records of a certain young man who “was accompanying” (συνηκολούθει) the arrested Jesus (14:51). The prefix σύν in the verb used for this certain young man, συνακολουθέω, contrasts with the adverbial phrase ἀπὸ μακρόθεν in 14:54.<sup>35</sup> Considering the other cases in Mark that there was a link between the two objects to be contrasted with each other, made by vicinity or similarity, the vicinity between the two cases of different ways of following the arrested Jesus seems to have been intended by Mark to create the sense of contrast. For example, the contrast between Peter and Peter’s mother in law is sensed only because of the direct link that the audience is led to make, just as is the case of Simon of Cyrene and Simon Peter. In this case of the two different ways of following Jesus, the proximity between the two cases and the similarity of the verb cause the audience to notice the intended contrast.

This suggestion would persuade few, however, if Mark 14:52 (“ὁ δὲ καταλιπὼν τὴν σινδὸνα γυμνὸς ἔφυγεν”) is understood literally. The same verb φεύγω used just two

---

<sup>35</sup> The verb συνακολουθέω appears only twice, while the form of the verb without the prefix σύν appears 18 times. The other place where the verb συνακολουθέω is used is 5:37, where Jesus allows only Peter, James, and John to accompany (συνακολουθησαί) to the place where the resurrection Jairus’s daughter takes place.

verses before in 14:50, where it is reported that everyone left Jesus and fled, is used in v. 52, seemingly suggesting that the young man did the same as the other disciples. However, to view that the young man fled in the same manner as the other disciples presents a narrative problem. The sequence of the events suggests that the young man kept following Jesus closely even after everyone else had fled, presenting a noticeable contrast between the disciples and the young man. Also, the syntactical similarity between v. 50 and v. 52 calls for a comparison: In both cases the subject is described by an aorist participle to have left something, before the subject is reported by an aorist indicative verb to have fled. The major difference is that it was Jesus that was left in the case of all the disciples, while it was the linen cloth that was left behind in the case of the young man. If this syntactical similarity was intended by Mark, this contrast regarding what was left behind might as well have been intended. Why would Mark contrast the two with such effort if he would polemicize both in the same manner at the end? Most importantly, unlike the other disciples, the young man is seized just as Jesus was. Read literally, it is to be understood that being seized caused the sudden change of mind and prompted him to flee; however, considering that he must have seen Jesus getting seized, thus must have known the clear danger of following Jesus closely, the shift in the young man's action feels too abrupt, causing many to find this short sequence "enigmatic."<sup>36</sup>

However enigmatic the scene may be, it is challenging to argue that fleeing naked of a linen cloth could mean something other than what its literal sense suggests, especially when there are similar cases of fleeing naked in Greek literature, as Howard

---

<sup>36</sup> Howard M. Jackson, "Why the Youth Shed His Cloak and Fled Naked: The Meaning and Purpose of Mark 14:51-52," *JBL* 116.2 (1997): 277.



M. Jackson lists.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, the scene of the naked youth must be understood with a careful consideration of the cultural implications that the enigmatic elements of the scene might have. Jackson suggests that “the obvious weight attached by the account to the garment and to its abandonment at the youth’s flight” needs to be accounted for.<sup>38</sup> It is a due suggestion, though he never explores into the cultural/metaphorical implications that “the garment and its abandonment” might have, and merely stops at providing its literary parallels.<sup>39</sup> Inspired by Gregory J. Riley’s take on the issue, I suggest that the linen cloth is meant to symbolize the young man’s physical body and fleeing of it is Mark’s euphemistic depiction of how the young man’s soul escaped his body, thus presenting the youth as the first martyr that contrasts with Peter the first apostate.

The ancient Greek literature frequently uses euphemistic metaphors for death. Homer rarely expresses death in a direct manner but uses metaphorical expressions using the terms such as ‘black night,’ ‘darkness,’ or ‘covering the eyes,’ in order to “describe death.”<sup>40</sup> Jason V. Morrison explains that “darkness or black night is often said to cover the eyes of the victim at the moment of death, signifying in fact that the hero has died.”<sup>41</sup> With this euphemistic tendency, Homer also uses the image of soul leaving the corpse, and sometimes, entering into Hades, to describe death (*Il.* 1.3–4; 5.296, 654; 7.328–30;

---

<sup>37</sup> Jackson, “Why the Youth Shed His Cloak,” 280–85.

<sup>38</sup> Jackson, “Why the Youth Shed His Cloak,” 277–78.

<sup>39</sup> Jackson, “Why the Youth Shed His Cloak,” 280–85.

<sup>40</sup> James V. Morrison, “Homeric Darkness: Pattern and Manipulation of Death Scenes in the ‘Iliad,’” *Hermes (Wiesb)*. 127.2 (1999): 136.

<sup>41</sup> Morrison, “Homeric Darkness,” 136.

8.123, 315; 11.333–4; 11.762–3; 14.518–19; 16.453, 505, 856–7; 22.256–7, 362–3; 24.167–8, 754–6; *Od.* 10.559–60; 11.217–22; 14.134, 426; 18.90–2; 21.153–4, 170–1; and 24.1–4). These instances reflect Homer’s understanding of death as soul’s departure from the body and its entry into Hades. Similarly, Plato has Socrates define death as “the separation of the soul from the body” (*Phaed.* 64c [Fowler, LCL]),<sup>42</sup> and later has Timaeus talk of death as soul’s experience either of going to Hades (*Tim.* 44c) or of being set loose from its bonds, thus flying out of the body (81d). This ancient Greek understanding of death as soul’s moving from the body to another place is also reflected in everyday euphemistic expressions: ἑκεῖ (there) frequently means “[in another world]”, as in Hades, thus οἱ ἑκεῖ would mean “[the dead]”,<sup>43</sup> βαίνω, which literally signifies a proceeding movement on foot, could euphemistically mean to die, based on its sense of departure;<sup>44</sup> and οἴχομαι, which means to go or to depart, also is used euphemistically to mean to die.<sup>45</sup> Paul, while sometimes expressing death with the metaphor of sleeping (κοιμάομαι, 1 Thess 4:15; 1 Cor 15:6, 18) which Mark, Luke, and John also use (Mark 5:39; Acts 7:60; John 11:11–13), reflecting their hope in resurrection, also employs the well-established image of soul departing from the body, and develops it to depict the Christian death. In Phil 1:20–26, Paul describes his option to die as departure from the

---

<sup>42</sup> Plato, *Plato: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, trans. Harold North Fowler, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).

<sup>43</sup> LSJ, ed. Henry Stuart Jones, 9th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), s.v. “ἑκεῖ.”

<sup>44</sup> LSJ, s.v. “βαίνω.” It is explained that “βέβηκα” is used as euphemism for τέθνηκα in Aeschylus’s *Persae* 1002.

<sup>45</sup> LSJ, s.v. “οἴχομαι.”

body to be with Christ, deeming it far better than remaining in the body (v. 23). His view to deem death as something to be gladly embraced parallels Socrates's description of how a true philosopher is to embrace death gladly without fear (*Phaed.* 67d–68b).

Along with the notion of soul's departure from the body, Paul's use of the metaphor of clothing might suggest that Mark's reference to the linen cloth require a special attention, more so on the assumption that Mark was influenced by the Pauline anthropology. Indeed, Paul's discourse regarding the new body in 2 Cor 5:1–10 seems to provide a hypothetical ground for interpreting "fleeing naked of a linen cloth" symbolically. Paul talks of the physical body as the earthly tent which if destroyed will be replaced with an eternal house in heaven (v. 1). Though the image of building is initially used, Paul mixes the image with the metaphor of clothing: The destruction of the earthly tent is described as unclothing and becoming naked (vv. 2–3), while we long to be clothed anew with the heavenly dwelling (v. 4). Paul also likens a believer's death to being away from the body and being with the Lord (vv. 6–8). The discourse reflects Paul's understanding of death, by which one leaves one's body to be with the Lord, as implied also in Phil 1:20–26; and of resurrection, in which one takes off the physical body and be clothed with the spiritual body, as more extensively discussed in 1 Cor 15:35–49 where the metaphor of clothing also is used (vv. 53–54). Jung Hoon Kim finds Paul's mixed metaphor of building and clothing similar to Philo's idea.<sup>46</sup> According to Kim, Philo, who "mixes the concept of being clothed with that of residing in a house," interprets "the garment of skin in Gen. 3.21" to connote "the physical human body,"

---

<sup>46</sup> Jung Hoon Kim, *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus* (London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 211.

which functions as “the residence of a soul.”<sup>47</sup> Indeed, Philo, while acknowledging the literal meaning of Gen 3:21, argues that “the garment of skins is a figurative expression for the natural skin, that is to say, our body” (*QG* 1.53).<sup>48</sup> This notion if applied to Mark 14:51–52 would suggest being stripped of the linen cloth as “a figurative expression” for death. Now it seems certainly possible that Mark was influenced by the ancient Greek understanding and expressions of death, perhaps more immediately by Paul’s, and attempted to apply the inherited understanding of death in expressing the martyrdom of the young man in 15:51–52. It must not be a coincidence that Paul in 2 Cor 5:3 uses the adjective γυμνός, the same one in Mark 14:52, to say that “we will not be found naked if we are clothed indeed.”

Mark’s intention to create a link between 14:51–52 and 16:5 becomes not so subtle due to the two words shared exclusively by the two passages. The first is the noun νεανίσκος, used first to introduce the naked youth in 14:51 and second to depict the youth “sitting on the right” in the tomb in 16:5; and the other is the participle form of the verb περιβάλλω, first to describe the former youth to have been wrapped with a linen cloth (σινδών) and second to depict the latter in the tomb as clothed with a long robe (στολή). Robin Scroggs and Kent I. Groff detect the connection between the two passages, saying, “The close parallelism of language strongly suggest the reader is intended to relate the

---

<sup>47</sup> Kim, *Significance of Clothing Imagery*, 211.

<sup>48</sup> Philo, *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged*, trans. Charles Duke Yonge (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993).

two stories to each other.”<sup>49</sup> The thesis of the two scholars on the two related passages is that “when seen against the backdrop of Christian baptismal practices, the appearance of the young man in both instances can best be explained as a symbolic pointer to the Christian initiate,” with the proposal that the former scene “symbolize dying with Christ” and the latter, “rising with Christ.”<sup>50</sup> Their reasoning based on the study of the baptismal ritual of the early church is most compelling.

Scroggs and Groff, however, hold that the young man, though he dies symbolically, actually flees and does not die, because “[t]he death facing the young man is taken up by Jesus himself,” that is to say, “Jesus dies for him, i.e., in his stead, and the young man is thus rescued—he escapes—from his own death,” suggesting a symbolic function that σινδών might have as a word exclusively appearing in 14:51 once and in “the account of the burial of Jesus (15:46).”<sup>51</sup> This view removes the need for interpreting fleeing naked as a euphemism for death. It is a ritualistic way of symbolic death, projected and woven into the passion narrative. Still, it does not resolve fully the narrative problem regarding the naked youth’s sudden change of attitude.

While the argument of Scroggs and Groff is based on the parallelism between the passages suggested by the shared words (νεανίσκος, περιβάλλω, and σινδών), and the shared category of words, that is, apparel (σινδών and στολή), they have not fully

---

<sup>49</sup> Robin Scroggs and Kent I. Groff, “Baptism in Mark: Dying and Rising with Christ,” *JBL* 92.4 (2018): 543.

<sup>50</sup> Scroggs and Groff, “Baptism in Mark,” 540.

<sup>51</sup> Scroggs and Groff, “Baptism in Mark,” 541.

explored the possible connections that the given passages might have with other passages in Mark using the same methodology. The youth in 16:5 is “sitting on the right.” The two scholars reject the view that the youth is the risen Christ, despite their recognition that the phrase is “a christological symbol” as it is used in 12:36 and 14:62.

In the meantime, they somehow miss the possible correlation that 16:5 might have with the story of the request of James and John in 10:35–45, the very passage that introduces the motif of sitting beside a divine ruler. James and John expect Jesus to be in his glory (v. 37), and the word δόξα in Mark is associated with the parousia of Jesus in its two other occurrences in Mark 8:38 and 13:26, thus suggesting a likely connotation of δόξα in 10:37 as Jesus’s divine glory. What does it mean to sit beside a divine ruler? The author of Hebrews associates “sitting at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty” (Heb 8:1) with the high priesthood of Jesus toward God (cf. 10:12 and 12:2). Just as the motif seems to be related to the Jewish priesthood, it might also be related to the ancient Roman priest (*flamen*), to whom the privileges such as “a right to a lictor [...], to the toga praetexta, the sella curulis, and to a seat in the senate in virtue of his office” were given.<sup>52</sup> Mark Antony would enjoy these privileges as the *flamen* of the divinized Caesar, appointed by Caesar himself.<sup>53</sup> Just as the high priesthood of the Jerusalem Temple during the Second Temple period was coveted and more than once purchased by bribery (by Jason and later by Menelaus), “priests in Rome were chosen not for morality but for

---

<sup>52</sup> Smith William et al., *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, ed. Smith William (London: John Murray, 1875), s.v. “flamen.” Among many contributors, William Ramsay wrote the article on the term “flamen” in pp. 540-541.

<sup>53</sup> Eleanor Goltz Huzar, *Mark Antony: A Biography* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978), 76.

politics.”<sup>54</sup> Julius Caesar is also known to have used “extensive bribery” to win the office of *pontifex maximus*.<sup>55</sup> James and John join the pursuit of this lucrative office; and, as the followers of Jesus from the beginning, they expect from Jesus something that Mark Antony had expected and earned from Caesar, as “the trusted follower selected by Caesar.”<sup>56</sup> James and John dare to ask Jesus for the glorious seats of high priest, having considered their having followed Jesus thus far, as claimed by Peter in 10:28 (“Look, we have left all things and followed you!”), as a good enough right to ask such thing. However, the one condition that Jesus puts forward for earning the right to sit at his sides is expressed in two symbols: drinking the cup that Jesus drinks and getting baptized with the baptism that Jesus is baptized with. The meaning of these two symbols is not ambiguous as Jesus ends the passage by the clear mission statement that he came to “give his life as a ransom for many” (10:45b).

Then, who will be given the seat? Jesus tells James and John that the seats belong to those “for whom it has been prepared” (10:40b). Is this a general statement that opens up the opportunity for the audience? Will the arc of “Who will sit beside Jesus?” remain open-ended, or will Mark close the arc with an answer? The verb for “it has been prepared” (ἐτοίμασται, 10:40b) is in its perfect indicative form, signifying that the discussed seats are not merely hypothetical. Except for Jesus, who would be sitting at the right hand of God (12:36 and 14:62), the only one that is described to have been seated

---

<sup>54</sup> Huzar, *Mark Antony*, 76.

<sup>55</sup> Lily Ross Taylor, “The Election of the Pontifex Maximus in the Late Republic,” *Class. Philol.* 37.4 (1942): 423.

<sup>56</sup> Huzar, *Mark Antony*, 76.

on the side of anything is the youth in the empty tomb (16:5), and he is seated on the right side. The notion of “sitting at the right” shared by 10:35–45 and 16:5 justifies the view that the latter functions as an answer to the question embedded in the former. Also, the youth in the tomb with his robe wrapped around him (16:5) is identified with the naked youth who left his linen cloth (14:51–52), not just due to the shared category of word (apparel) but also due to the logical sequence, which the shared category of word presents, as Scroggs and Groff indicate in their reading of the two passages in the context of the early church’s baptismal ceremony, in which the initiate would take off the linen cloth before baptism, and wear the white robe after baptism.<sup>57</sup> Thus, the one for whom the seat beside Jesus has been prepared, to whom Jesus refers in 10:40, is identified as the youth in 14:51–52 and in 16:5.

It does not seem that Mark would introduce such an important figure at the end of the whole narrative as “some youth” (νεανίσκος τις). This character came in and became woven into the whole narrative earlier than most would detect. It seems that Mark was giving the answer to the question embedded in 10:40 right away, in 10:46–52. Considering Mark’s chiastic style along with Matera’s suggestion that 8:22–26 might be a paradigmatic passage for the very next passage, 8:27–30, it is not far-fetched to say that Mark often makes his point by the way he lays out the passages. The healing of the blind Bartimaeus (10:46–52) immediately follows the pericope of the request of James and John (10:35–45), functioning as the corresponding answer to the question to be raised in the conversation between Jesus and the two brothers.

---

<sup>57</sup> Scroggs and Groff, “Baptism in Mark,” 537.



Pointing out the immediate proximity between the two passages alone, however, does not suffice as evidence that the latter corresponds to the former. Another evidence, according to Joel F. Williams, is that both stories have “the same question” by Jesus: to Bartimaeus, “τί σοι θέλεις ποιήσω;” (10:51a), and to the brothers, “τί θέλετέ με ποιήσω ὑμῖν;” (10:36), while presenting a contrast by the disparity between the two answers.<sup>58</sup> More importantly, just as 14:51–52 and 16:5 share the same category of word (σινδών and στολή) that provides a logical sequence of the arc of the youth, the pericope of Bartimaeus has the word ἱμάτιον (cloak), which belongs to the same category of word as σινδών and στολή, providing a possible logical prequel to 14:51–52 that functions as the logical prequel to 16:5. Bartimaeus’s ἱμάτιον, as the everyday outer garment, is likely to have been his only garment, or the only clothes that he had if he did not have a χιτῶν, which would be worn under a ἱμάτιον. This might explain the situation of the young man wrapped in σινδών in 14:51, since there is no other logical explanation for the young man’s unusual outfit, except for Scroggs and Groff’s theory of reading the passage “against the backdrop of Christian baptismal practice,”<sup>59</sup> which is not explicit in the text. If 16:5 is indeed Mark’s answer to the question embedded in 10:40, then the narrative arc that is designed to convey the answer was initiated in Bartimaeus story, developed in 14:51–53, and completed in 16:5. This view that these three passages are to be read as an arc supports my initial suggestion that the young man’s fleeing naked of the linen cloth is indeed a euphemism for his death. Since the pericope of James and John’s request clearly

---

<sup>58</sup> Joel F. Williams, *Other Followers of Jesus: Minor Characters as Major Figures in Mark’s Gospel*, Journal of the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 102 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 157–58.

<sup>59</sup> Scroggs and Groff, “Baptism in Mark,” 540.

indicates that the least condition to be met to be granted the seat is to die, fleeing naked of the linen cloth should be seen not as a ritualistic way of symbolic death but as an actual death expressed symbolically in the ceremonial language of baptism.

Mark's emphasis on Bartimaeus's unrelenting characteristic by showing that he kept crying out to Jesus despite the rebuke by many is coherent with the fact that the young man followed Jesus closely despite the threat of the violent crowd but creates a narrative problem with his sudden change of attitude, which remains unexplained by Scroggs and Groff. Most importantly, denying oneself, as the first condition for truly following Jesus in Mark 8:34, is illustrated by Jesus himself in the prayer scene in Gethsemane. Jesus, while asking his Father to remove the cup of impending death from him, says, "ἀλλ' οὐ τί ἐγὼ θέλω ἀλλὰ τί σὺ" (14:36c). Just as this denial of his own will, with the cup that he did not refuse which points to the first part of the question that Jesus asks James and John in 10:38 ("Are you able to drink the cup that I drink?"), results in his death, Bartimaeus's attempt to follow Jesus closely, wrapped with the ceremonial linen cloth for baptism which points back to the second part of the same question ("or to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"), also results in his death.

Mark 8:35–37 as a supplement to v. 34 also clarifies the implication of denying oneself as losing one's life for the sake of the gospel. According to Fleddermann, 8:35 is also Mark's adaptation of Q 17:33, which has "ὅς ἐάν εὕρῃ τὴν ψυχὴν ἀπολέσει αὐτήν ὃς δ' ἂν ἀπολέσῃ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ εὕρήσει αὐτήν."<sup>60</sup> Mark redacts Q's use of the verb εὕρισκω and uses the verb σώζω instead, modifying the contrast between "find" and

---

<sup>60</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 142–44.

“lose” into the contrast between “save” and “lose.”<sup>61</sup> The notion of salvation that the verb σώζω as “a technical theological term”<sup>62</sup> is intended to express does not appear in Q, while Mark uses the verb 14 times in his Gospel. Especially in 5:34 and 10:52 the verb σώζω is used in direct association with faith: “Your faith has saved you.” If Mark was influenced by Pauline soteriology, which states that a person is saved by faith, Mark might be using these two cases of healing in parallel to promote the doctrine. Mark also inserts the prepositional phrase “ἐνεκεν ἐμοῦ καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου” (v. 35), providing a concrete purpose of losing the soul, making it easier to make a narrative out of the saying. Indeed, the reason why the naked youth lost his soul from the body is clearly suggested to be on account of following Jesus closely, while the aftermath of losing his soul for the sake of Jesus was to gain his soul back wrapped in a white robe to announce the primary content of the gospel, which is: the resurrection of Jesus, the one that was crucified (“τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον,” 16:6). The surprising fact that Q does not mention the term εὐαγγέλιον, which permeates the Pauline corpus, and the parallel that the youth’s message in 16:6 makes with the Pauline definition of the gospel in 1 Cor 15:1–4 suggests again Pauline influence. When the story of Bartimaeus, the naked young man, and the young man at the tomb are viewed as one story, it becomes a full-blown illustration of how one should follow Jesus and lose one’s soul for Jesus and for the gospel to gain it back, referring back to 8:34–35 as its antetext. 8:36–37 uses the contrast between the two aorist infinitives, κερδῆσαι and ζημιωθῆναι, in order to emphasize the utmost importance of soul, alluding to Paul’s indelible confession in Phil 3:8, where he uses the same two verbs

---

<sup>61</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 143.

<sup>62</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 144.

to say that he lost all things in order to gain Christ. Mark carries on into 8:36–37 the contrast created in v.34 by the two verbs, σφίζω and ἀπόλλυμι, while switching to a new pair of verbs, κερδαίνω and ζημιόω, in vv. 36–37, rendering the speculation that Mark might refer to Phil 3:8 more imaginable. Troels Engberg-Peterson also notes that these two verbs remind one “forcibly of Phil 3:7–8,” suggesting that “Mark is here in fact drawing directly on Paul [...].”<sup>63</sup>

According to Fleddermann, Mark 8:38 has been redacted from Q 12:8–9, which has “πᾶς ὃς ὁμολογήσει ἐν ἐμοὶ ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὁμολογήσει ἐν αὐτῷ ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀγγέλων· 9 ὃς δὲ ἀρνήσεται με ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀρνήσεται αὐτὸν ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀγγέλων.”<sup>64</sup> Mark omits the first half of the Q passage, and only deals with the second half, which is about denying Jesus. Mark borrowed the verb “ἀρνέομαι” from Q 12:9, intensified the verb with the prefix ἀπό, and inserted the intensified verb ἀπαρνέομαι in 8:34, and later made use of the thus introduced verb in Peter’s betrayal sequence (14:30; 31; 72). And Mark uses the verb ἐπαισχύνομαι in the place of ἀρνέομαι, with “καὶ τοὺς ἐμοὺς λόγους” added to “με,” Q’s simple object of the verb “ἀρνέομαι.” The newly employed verb “ἐπαισχύνομαι [be ashamed of]” and objective “τοὺς ἐμοὺς λόγους [my words]” allude to the memorable statement by Paul in Rom 1:16, which says, “Οὐ γὰρ ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον δύναμις γὰρ Θεοῦ ἐστὶν εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον

---

<sup>63</sup> Anne Vig Skoven et al., *Mark and Paul: Comparative Essays Part II. For and Against Pauline Influence on Mark*, ed. Eve-Marie Becker, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, and Mogens Müller (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2014), 205.

<sup>64</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 148–52.

καὶ Ἑλληνι.” At any rate, Mark 8:38 presupposes a circumstance in which a believer is expected to confess or deny his or her allegiance to Jesus, preparing the scene in which Peter is said to have experienced the circumstance in a least threatening way (14:66–72). This reflects the reality that Mark’s audience must have experienced as Christians directly or indirectly up until 70 CE, which involved the persecution that could lead to death.

Mark, with the inherited Q 14:27; 17:33; and 12:8–9, composed 8:34–38, which as a whole functions as the criterion against which the audience can judge the characters that revolve around the passage with the terminological links with it. Peter, James, and John could not fulfill the criterion of “denying oneself” and “taking up one’s cross” in following Jesus, while Bartimaeus represents the fulfillment of the criterion of “denying oneself,” and Simon of Cyrene, the criterion of “taking up one’s cross.” The meaning of “denying oneself” is illustrated by Jesus’s prayer in Gethsemane (“ἀλλ’ οὐ τί ἐγὼ θέλω ἀλλὰ τί σύ,” 14:36c) and is clarified of its ultimate implication as death through the image of the cup (“παρένεγκε τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ,” 14:36b). The narrative involving Bartimaeus expands with the motif of “sitting beside Jesus” introduced by the request of James and John (10:35–45). Since what the cup symbolizes and what the baptism symbolizes in Jesus’s discourse with James and John (10:38–40) are identical, the baptismal experience that Bartimaeus the initiate, who was wrapped with the linen cloth (σινδών) since he abandoned his outer garment (ἱμάτιον) to follow Jesus, goes through, which involves changing of clothes from the linen cloth to the white robe, symbolizes the actual death and resurrection of Bartimaeus, who is described to be sitting on the right (16:5). The polemic against the disciples is already devastating by Peter’s

denial and Judas's betrayal, yet amplified by the sharp contrast created by the other characters' stories woven into the arc of the disciples. And at the center of these contrasting characters and their stories is the discipleship discourse of 8:34–38.

#### 4.5. Pauline Tradition as Mark's Ideological Platform

As seen thus far, the polemic against the disciples is persistently developed and intentionally amplified throughout the Gospel of Mark. What motivated Mark to do this? A polemic presupposes an actual relationship in conflict, which becomes the very setting for the writing. What was the conflict that was rattling enough to prompt Mark to muster his literary skill to polemicize against the esteemed disciple group? The traces of the Pauline influence in Mark point to an answer. The argument for the Pauline influence on Mark is an old one. F. C. Baur (1847), due to the Pauline elements that he detected in Mark, suggested Mark as a synthesis of Petrine Matthew and Pauline Luke.<sup>65</sup> Gustav Volkmar argued in *Die Religion Jesu* (1857) that Mark represented Pauline Christianity, suggesting Mark as 'Pauline theology in narrative form.'<sup>66</sup> According to Thomas P. Nelligan, despite M. Werner's significant counterargument in *Der Einfluß paulinischer Theologie im Markusevangelium* (1923) that Mark was independent from Paul and the similarity between the two was coincidental, the argument for Pauline influence on Mark was maintained and developed by scholars such as B. W. Bacon (1925), W. Marxsen

---

<sup>65</sup> Thomas P. Nelligan, *The Quest for Mark's Sources: An Exploration of the Case for Mark's Use of First Corinthians* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2015), 35–36.

<sup>66</sup> Nelligan, *Quest for Mark's Sources*, 36.

(1956), J. C. Fenton (1957), Ralph Philip Martin (1978), Michael D. Goulder (1992), David Seeley (1993), William R. Telford (1999), Joel Marcus (2000), James G. Crossley (2011), Michael F. Bird (2011), and Tom Dykstra (2012), and so on, with various approaches and depths.<sup>67</sup>

Among these scholars, Joel Marcus attempts to refute Werner. Werner concluded that any agreement between Paul and Mark stemmed from the general early Christian view point. Marcus argued that the differences between Paul and Mark do not prove the disconnection between the two, since other Paulinists such as Luke, deutero-Pauline and Pastoral authors, and Ignatius Antioch all have notable differences from Paul despite their claims to have inherited Pauline ideas.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, “Ein Schüler kann von einem Lehrer beeinflusst sein und dennoch eine abweichende Lehre entwickeln, zumal dann, wenn sie verschiedenen Generationen angehören.”<sup>69</sup>

With the disputable dissimilarities that Werner argued to have stemmed from different emphases in Christology and soteriology,<sup>70</sup> undisputable similarities abound. Heike Omerzu summarizes the research of several scholars, such as Wolfgang Schenk, Marxsen, Pierre-Marie Beaude, Markus, and Seeley, on the similarities between Paul and Mark as follows: 1) Both use of the term “gospel” prominently “to describe the core of

---

<sup>67</sup> Nelligan, *Quest for Mark's Sources*, 37–46.

<sup>68</sup> Skoven et al., *Mark and Paul*, 33–34.

<sup>69</sup> Eric Kun Chun Wong, *Evangelien Im Dialog Mit Paulus: Eine Intertextuelle Studie Zu Den Synoptikern* (Göttingen Oakville, Conn: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 63.

<sup>70</sup> Skoven et al., *Mark and Paul*, 34–38.

the Christian ‘kerygma’” (Mark 1:1, 14; Gal 1:6–9; Rom 1:1, 16–17; 15:16; 1 Thess 2:2, 9); 2) both reflect on “a theology of the cross” and emphasize “Jesus’[s] victory over demonic powers” (Mark 1:23–28, 32–39; 5:1–20; Rom 8:38–9:1; 1 Cor 15:24; etc.); 3) both portray Jesus as “a new Adam” (Mark 1:9–15; Rom 5:12–21; 1 Cor 15:21–22, 45–49) and emphasize “the faith in Jesus and God, often in a dualistic manner” (Mark 4:10–12; Rom 11:7–10; 1 Cor 2:6–16); 4) both emphasize that Jesus came for sinners and not for the righteous (Mark 2:17; Rom 4:15; 5:18–19); 5) both and “have similar views of soteriology” (Mark 10:45; Rom 3:24–25; 5:8) and “the primacy of the Gospel to the Jews” (Mark 7:27; Rom 1:16); 6) both “represent a negative view [of] Peter as well as Jesus’[s] family” (Mark 3:20–21, 31–35; 8:31–33; Gal 2); 7) both have lists of vices (Mark 7:21; Rom 1:29; Gal 5:19–21) and “emphasize the ‘hardening of the heart’” (Mark 10:5; Rom 2:5); 8) both “attest to women’s right to divorce” (Mark 10:10–12; 1 Cor 7:10); 9) both emphasize the importance of patience before the end-time (Mark 13:13; Rom 2:7); 10) both highlight “the difference between hidden and revealed” (Mark 4:21–25; Rom 2:28).<sup>71</sup>

As suggested in the fifth point above, Gal 2 corresponds to the Markan polemic against the Jewish disciples represented by Peter. The polemic against Peter is peculiar to Paul and Mark, because the later Gospel writers managed to restore Peter’s reputation. The fundamental difference between Paul and Mark in their polemic against Peter is that Mark’s polemic was not against Peter himself but the community that claimed to be represented by him, while Paul’s polemic was actually against his contemporary Peter.

---

<sup>71</sup> Skoven et al., *Mark and Paul*, 56.



There is about 20 years of gap between Paul and Mark, and I doubt that they had any direct relationship as a teacher and a student. However, it is certainly possible that Mark's community and the community represented by Peter had a conflicting relationship even decades after Paul and Peter died. The sort of religious hegemony centered around the Jerusalem that can be detected in Gal 2 must have continued well into 70s, as long as the first church in Jerusalem stayed in Jerusalem with the leadership figures directly related to the historical Jesus, such as Peter, John, and James the brother of Jesus.

Marcus notes that Werner attempts to point out the christological differences between Paul and Mark, observing that Mark's Christology emphasizes the power of the Spirit while Paul's focuses on the weakness of the flesh.<sup>72</sup> Given that Werner's observation has some validity, Mark had his reasons to emphasize that particular aspect of Christology. Paul ministered under Claudius and Nero, who did not pose so much of a threat to the Christian claim to Jesus's messiahship. Mark, however, was dealing with Vespasian, who posed a real threat to the Christian claim to Jesus's messiahship through his effective imperial propaganda. Thus, Mark needed to come up with a christological image more powerful than the figure that Vespasian was claiming to be. That kind of christological image was not found in Q, which Mark used as a source. He had to redact and supplement Q heavily in order to present a Christology that could prevail against the imperial propaganda.

---

<sup>72</sup> Skoven et al., *Mark and Paul*, 34.

As Fleddermann shows, Mark orchestrates “the three main titles, ‘Christ,’ ‘Son of God,’ and ‘Son of Man’” in presenting his Christology (cf. Mark 8:27–9:1; 14:61–62).<sup>73</sup> Despite the absence of the term “Christ” in Q, the confession that Jesus is Christ is still ascribed to Peter (8:29), indicating that Mark acknowledges that the term “Christ” had originated from and was used in the Petrine community. This is also indicated in 1 Cor 15:3–7, where Paul says that he “received” the gospel about the resurrected “Christ” who appeared to Cephas first. Mark at the same time argues that the proper understanding of the term was missing or forgotten in its Petrine use, since Peter is said to have opposed Jesus regarding his upcoming passion and resurrection (8:31–33). The basis of this argument must have been Paul’s frequent use of the title “Christ” in close association with Jesus’s passion and resurrection. The term “Christ” to a Paulinist must have been inseparable from the kerygmatic content of the gospel due to their close association made by Paul culminating in the phrase, “the gospel of Christ” (1 Thess 3:2; Gal 1:7; 1 Cor 9:12; Phil 1:27; 2 Cor 2:12; 9:13; 10:14; Rom 15:16). However, in the three occasions where Mark has Jesus present the kerygma in its complete form, which has both his passion and resurrection (8:31; 9:31; 10:33–34), the title “Son of Man” is used instead of “Christ.” This is mainly because “Son of Man” is how Jesus refers to himself in Q, but also is an effort to incorporate the term into the Pauline Christology. The term “Son of Man” is absent from the Pauline corpus, but Paul’s understanding of parousia revealed in 1 Thess 4:13–18 and 5:1–11 shares the eschatological aspect of the term (cf. Q 12:39–40; 17:23–24, 26–30), thus rendering the term compatible with Pauline eschatology. Thus,

---

<sup>73</sup> Fleddermann, *Mark and Q*, 151.

Mark puts together the term “Son of Man” and Paul’s apocalyptic eschatology in 13:26–27, which parallels 1 Thess 4:16–17, except that the Pauline passage does not include “Son of Man.” In other words, Mark retained Q’s “Son of Man” but colored the term with the kerygmatic tone of the Pauline term “Christ,” while preserving its apocalyptic aspect.

The title “Son of God” cannot have been employed from Q since Jesus is never called Son of God in Q, except for one occasion (Q 4:1–4, 9–12) where the devil dares Jesus with the conditional clause “If you are God’s Son” (4:3, 9), a passage which Burton Mack suspects to have been added to Q only after the fall of Jerusalem.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, it seems that Mark got the term from Paul (1 Cor 1:9; 15:28; 2 Cor 1:19; Gal 1:16; Rom 1:3, 4, 9; 5:10; 8:3, 33). Though the notion of Jesus’s divine origin is pre-Pauline (Phil 2:6–7), the notion must have been deemed counterintuitive in the Palestinian Jewish Christian groups, who held to a low Christology that involved adoptionism. Paul can be misread to support adoptionism in Rom 1:4, where Jesus is said to have been “appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead” (NIV). However, James D. G. Dunn argues that the verse does not affirm adoptionism, since it envisages “a divine sonship which embraced the whole of Jesus’[s] life (as Son of David as well), but a sonship which was also enhanced by the resurrection.”<sup>75</sup> Dunn understands Jesus’s appointment as God’s Son as “a quantum shift of perspective on reality” and not as a shift of reality.<sup>76</sup> This view is presupposed by Paul’s inclusion of the Christ Hymn in Phil 2:6–

---

<sup>74</sup> Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins*, 82.

<sup>75</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 243.

<sup>76</sup> Dunn, *Theology of Paul*, 243.

11 and is supported by that Paul uses ὁρίζω in Rom 1:4, which denotes an act of declaring the existing reality and not of changing it. This is confirmed by the phrase “περὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ” in the previous verse (Rom 1:3). This Pauline notion that Jesus was God’s Son even before the actual resurrection occurred is reflected in Mark in that Jesus is declared as the Son of God from the beginning of the Gospel even before Jesus did anything significant except for having just been baptized (1:9–11). The same was declared on the mountain of transfiguration (9:7), and Mark emphatically associates the transfiguration with the resurrection (9:9–10). While Mark associates the declaration of the divine sonship with the resurrection, as Paul does in Rom 1:4, the title “Son of God” is deliberately avoided at the actual scene of resurrection. The young man at the tomb titles Jesus “Nazarene” (16:6), and not Christ nor God’s Son. Mark’s intention is to avoid promoting the adoptionism of the Jewish Christian community. The declaration of the divine sonship at Jesus’s baptism also is to be interpreted not as adoption but as declaration, due to the significance of the declaration on the mountain of transfiguration. It seems that Mark agrees with the high Christology that the Christ Hymn in Phil 2:6–11 represents, against the adoptionism of his Jewish Christian opponents. Mark’s series of aretology that made his Christology look different from Paul’s actually presupposes the Pauline Christology that terms Christ as God’s Son from the beginning.

As briefly suggested above, the Pauline soteriology that a person is saved by faith is advocated in Mark through the two healing cases in which Jesus says, “Your faith has saved you” (5:34; 10:52). According to Maureen W. Yeung, “most scholars regard the saying ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε in Mk 5:34 as Markan redaction, although they offer

different explanations.”<sup>77</sup> Some argue that “this saying is added to correct the preceding magical presentation of the story,” which involves touching of Jesus’s garment, while others argue that “the saying is the redactor’s commendation of the woman’s faith which transcends the legitimate ritual barriers.”<sup>78</sup> Neither can explain the occurrence of the saying in Bartimaeus’s story (10:52), where the setting does not involve a “magical presentation” or “legitimate ritual barriers.”<sup>79</sup> If the saying is to be argued to be redactional, the redactor’s intention to render the saying thus has to be explained. And the redactor’s intention is best hypothesized by suggesting a polemical setting that might have provided the need for the redaction. I suggest that the saying is Mark’s way of supporting Pauline soteriology by arguing that it was Jesus himself who constituted the way of salvation by faith. In order to prevail in the soteriological debate that Paul engaged in in Galatians and Romans and must have continued in Mark’s day, Mark summons Jesus and has him declare twice that it is faith that saves.

William Loader focuses on the differences between Pauline soteriology and Markan soteriology, underlining that the exclusive centrality of Christ’s redemptive death in Pauline soteriology is not matched in Mark since the ministry of Jesus before his death

---

<sup>77</sup> Maureen W. Yeung, *Faith in Jesus and Paul: A Comparison with Special Reference to “Faith That Can Remove Mountains” and “Your Faith Has Healed/Saved You”* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 58.

<sup>78</sup> Yeung, *Faith in Jesus and Paul*, 58.

<sup>79</sup> Yeung, *Faith in Jesus and Paul*, 58.

still holds significance in Mark.<sup>80</sup> However, the difference might have stemmed from the difference in genre. Just as the Johannine epistles cannot contain the aretology of the Gospel of John, the Gospel of John cannot be exclusively about the central themes of the Johannine epistles, due to the genre difference; however, the similarities in theology are too great not to lead one to conclude that they are by the same community. Especially, as seen in chapter one of this dissertation, both the Gospel of John and 1 John face the same polemical situation in which they defend their Christology against the Thomasene understanding of Jesus's body, developed and maintained through the *Gospel of Thomas*, the *Book of Thomas*, and the *Acts of Thomas* (1 John 2:18–27; 4:1–3; John 19:28–37; 20:24–29). When two documents share the same position in a contention between two communities, despite other differences caused by the genre difference, the two documents are most likely to have stemmed from the same community. It must be noted that Pauline soteriology was born in a polemical setting, where Paul had to defend his gospel against the Jewish legalism of the Jewish Christian community. Generally speaking, it seems obvious that Mark would side with Paul's position against Jewish legalism, since Mark's Jesus is presented to refute the legalistic attacks by the Pharisees (2:23–28; 3:1–6; 7:1–13).

“Faith” was the term that Paul used to describe the concept that could counter Jewish legalism in a polemical setting. The term initially was used to refer to faithfulness in serving God in 1 Thess (ca. 50 AD), but was used for the first time as the counterterm

---

<sup>80</sup> Johannes Wischmeyer et al., *Paul and Mark: Comparative Essays Part I. Two Authors at the Beginnings of Christianity*, ed. Oda Wischmeyer, David C. Sim, and Ian J. Elmer (Göttingen Oakville, Conn: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2014), 455–56.

for “the works of law” in Galatians (2:16; 3:1–14). It became associated with the other soteriological terms such as “justification” (δικαίωσις, not δικαιοσύνη) and salvation (σωτηρία), as Paul engaged in the soteriological debate and developed his argument (Gal 2:16; 3:8, 24; Phil 3:9; Rom 3:28; 4:5; 5:1; 10:9). The close association between “salvation” and “faith” seems to have been well established in the deutero-Pauline phase, as the formula “salvation through faith” (2 Tim 3:15. cf. Eph 2:8) suggests. In Q, “faith” is not a soteriological term, and mainly refers to confidence in receiving the divine provision (Q 7:9; 12:28; 17:6). This aspect of Q’s “faith” is also preserved in Mark 11:22–24. However, Mark deliberately criticizes the disciples, who might represent the opponents of Paul’s soteriological debate, for their lack of faith (4:40; 9:19). And this polemic is intensified by the figures that have faith (2:5; 5:34; 10:52). Faith is associated with the forgiveness of sin in the healing of the paralyzed man in 2:5, and is referred to as the direct cause of salvation in the healing of the bleeding woman (5:34) and the healing of Bartimaeus (10:52).

The story of the bleeding woman (5:24b–34) and the story of Bartimaeus (10:46–52) are linked through the shared word ἰμάτιον (5:27, 28, 30 and 10:50), not to mention that in both passages a great crowd (5:24b; 10:46) and Jesus’s disciples (5:31; 10:46) constitute the setting; the aorist participle of ἀκούω is used to describe the reason for the patient to have faith in Jesus (5:27; 10:47. cf. “ἡ πίστις ἐξ ἀκοῆς,” Rom 10:17); hearing about Jesus caused the patient to act boldly to reach out to Jesus (5:27; 10:47); the second person singular imperative “ὑπάφε” (5:34; 10:52) is used to confirm the healing (cf. 1:44; 2:11; 7:29); and the identical sentence “ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε” is uttered by Jesus (5:34; 10:52). These two stories as a pair not only have Jesus utter the saying that can be

the theological basis for Paul's soteriological argument that emphasizes faith, but also contextualize the deeper and personal level of Pauline soteriology reflected in Phil 3:10–11, as they are further expanded.

In Phil 3:4–11, Paul first claims that he lost all things, including his former attachment to pure Jewishness and legal perfectionism, in order to gain Christ (vv. 4–8). The purpose of Paul's gaining Christ is to be found in Christ, not with Paul's own righteousness based on the law but with the righteousness that comes from God through faith in Christ's faithfulness (v. 9). Then, the purpose of being found in Christ is "to know him and the power (δύναμις) of his resurrection and the fellowship (κοινωνία) of his sufferings, being conformed to his death" (v. 10) to reach "the resurrection from the dead" (v. 11). Becoming conformed to Jesus's death to attain the resurrection is contextualized in the story of Bartimaeus. He through the symbolic baptism of death and resurrection becomes conformed to Jesus, wearing the robe modified by the adjective λευκός, which appeared only once before to modify Jesus's garment in the transfiguration passage (9:3). Knowing the power of Jesus's resurrection and the fellowship (κοινωνία) of his sufferings is contextualized in the story of the woman who touched Jesus, as her story continues in 14:3–9 where she reappears to anoint Jesus.

Both the story of the bleeding woman (5:24b–34) and the story of the woman who anoints Jesus (14:3–9) are deemed by scholars as later insertions. Regarding the latter, Craig A. Evans, along with other scholars, observes that "the story is an insertion between vv 1–2 and vv 10–11, verses that narrate the ruling priests' plotting against Jesus



and Judas Iscariot's agreement with the priests to hand Jesus over to them."<sup>81</sup> Regarding the former, Boring points out that "the change in grammatical style from predominantly present-tense Greek verbs to predominantly past-tense (aorist and imperfect), and the extraordinarily long chains of participles with which the scene begins [...]" are indications "that this story was originally separate."<sup>82</sup> The latter retains some similar syntactical features as the former, with the verbs in aorist and imperfect, used in combination with participles, especially to introduce the woman and her action (14:3; cf. 5:25–27). Both women are introduced as "γυνή" (5:25; 14:3) followed by a present participle ("οὔσα," 5:25; "ἔχουσα," 14:3). The Syrophenician woman in 7:25 also is introduced as "γυνή," but quickly differentiated as a Greek in 7:26, while the bleeding woman or the woman who anoints Jesus is not specified as to her ethnicity. Since for a woman to "intrude into a men's festive meal" is already a violation of "cultural convention,"<sup>83</sup> it is not likely that the intruder was a gentile woman. There are other similarities between 5:24b–34 and 14:3–9, such as that both women are active agents of the actions done to Jesus and that neither is given a line to utter, thus highlighting actions and not words, whereas the Syrophenician woman is rather outspoken (7:28–29). However, the most evident is the shared use of the word σῶμα (5:29; 14:8), first as the woman's and second as Jesus's. Out of the four times the word appears in Mark, the two other appearances are in 14:22, where Jesus calls the broken bread his body, and in 15:43, where Joseph of Arimathea asks for Jesus's body. In the first appearance of the word

---

<sup>81</sup> Evans, *Mark 8:27-16:20*, 358.

<sup>82</sup> Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 159.

<sup>83</sup> Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, 382.

(5:29) the meaning is a regular human body; in the second, the word is applied to denote Jesus's body (14:8), excluding any docetic confusion regarding the body of Jesus, while underlining the actual death and burial of Jesus (15:43). If it is noticed that the passage of the first communion (14:12–26) is the only place that shares the use of the word “αἷμα” with the passage of the healing of the bleeding woman (5:25, 29), a most striking possibility is suggested: The bleeding woman can be seen to have symbolically participated in the communion when she touched the garment of Jesus and, as the result, became healed from the flow of the “blood” in her “body” (5:27), just as Bartimaeus can be seen to have been baptized symbolically by following Jesus to the end. The two most important sacraments of the early churches are partaken in by these two figures symbolically, thus revealing the true meaning of the two rituals. The communion is to know the power of Jesus's resurrection and to participate in Jesus's sufferings that are expressed in his broken σῶμα (14:22) and his αἷμα poured out for many (v. 24), while the baptism is to become “like him in his death” to attain “the resurrection from the dead” (Phil 3:10b–11).

It seems that the locations of the two stories of the same woman who touched Jesus's garment and anointed Jesus have been intended by Mark. The former is wrapped in the significant resurrection story (5:21–24a, 35–43). And the bleeding woman was healed by the same power (δύναμις, 5:30) that raised the dead girl. It is as if the bleeding woman intercepted the power that was supposed to be used to raise the girl, except that the power of Jesus was inexhaustible. Therefore, the bleeding woman can be said to have tasted and known, as “ἔγνων” in 5:29 indicates, the power of resurrection, corresponding to the first part of Phil 3:10–11, “to know him and the power of his resurrection.” The

anointment story is wrapped in the story of Judas Iscariot going to the chief priests to betray Jesus, and is followed by the passage of the last supper which becomes the first communion (κοινωνία). Surrounded by the events that prepare the actual passion of Jesus, the woman's anointing is interpreted by Jesus as anointing Jesus's body "into the burial" (14:8), presenting the woman's action as a participation (κοινωνία) in Jesus's sufferings, corresponding to the second part of Phil 3:10–11, "[to know] the participation of his sufferings." The aspect of the woman's story that she spent all in vain to cure her disease and again spent all to anoint Jesus resonate with the theme of losing it all to gain Christ in Phil 3:7–8.

#### 4.6. Conclusion

Just as Mark contextualizes 8:34–38, which was redacted from Q 14:27; 17:33; and 12:8–9, into a full-blown narrative, which features two contrasting disciple figures, Mark contextualizes the Pauline soteriology reflected in Phil 3:10–11 into the two stories, which symbolize the two sacraments of communion and baptism, both of which were indispensable in the life of the early church. While the language of the imperial cult and the Q passages have been employed to polemicize against the parties that had generated the materials, Mark employs the theological ideas of the Pauline epistles and advocates them in his Gospel. Mark uses Pauline material not only to deal with the theological issues, such as Christology and soteriology, but also to deal with the practical issues of gentile mission involving the matter of keeping the Jewish customs, such as Sabbath and

kosher. When it is shown that Mark represents Paul's position in the issues of gentile mission, Mark 7:1–13 can be viewed to be dealing with the issue that was current in Mark's audience as a gentile Christian community.

## CHAPTER FIVE: A RHETORICAL-CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF MARK 7:1–23 IN SEARCH OF A HIDDEN POLEMIC

### 5.1. Introduction

I have overviewed Mark in chapter three and concluded that Mark is polemical rhetoric in the form of narrative. It has two major polemical points. The first is extra-ecclesiastical since it is against the imperial propaganda of Vespasian, and the other is intra-ecclesiastical since it is against the Jewish disciples who held onto Jerusalem and kept Jesus as their locally-bound exemplary Torah observer. A polemical passage in Mark has its own polemical point, which often falls under these two categories. 7:1–23 falls in the second category. In chapter four, I demonstrated that the Jewish disciples are indeed criticized throughout the Gospel and behind the polemic is Pauline theology. In this chapter, I will examine Mark 7:1–23 as polemical rhetoric which has Pauline tradition behind it. Mark uses the Jesus tradition which Paul was aware of but is absent in Q. Mark employs the polemical language of purity of heart to criticize the hypocrisy of the Jewish disciples, who are likened to the Pharisees and the scribes.

In this chapter, I will answer three important questions. First, is the purity logion of Mark 7:15 authentic to the historical Jesus? This question is important because it is related to how much emphasis Mark puts into composing the given pericope. Mark, while formulating narratives about Jesus, still makes use of reliable sources and builds upon them, as seen in chapter four. Redactional tendency appears, but not to the point where the core content of the original saying is lost. The more intact the source is preserved, the

more emphasis is given to the message that the preserved tradition carries, showing that Mark actually cares about the authenticity of the material that he uses. Second, what is the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark 7:1–23? Did Mark really record a historical incident? What does the pericope reflect regarding Mark’s then situation? These questions relate to my thesis that Mark did not actually mean the Pharisees by the character of the Pharisees but the Jewish Christians from Jerusalem. These questions will be answered by finding the hidden polemic in Mark 7:1–23 through the rhetorical critical analysis in comparison with Gal 2:11–16, which I find intertextually related to Mark 7:1–23. Third, if Mark was actually criticizing some Jewish Christians in the guise of the character of Pharisees and scribes, can we identify them in the history of the first century Christianity? Paul talks of helping the poor in Gal 2:10, perhaps referring to the Jewish Christian community, which is later called Ebionites, the group that shows similar characteristics of the polemical target of Paul and Mark. I suggest the Ebionites as the direct descendants of the Jewish Christian community that Mark had contention with.

## 5.2. Is the Purity Logion Authentic to Jesus?

John Dominic Crossan writes, “Jesus left behind him thinkers not memorizers, disciples not reciters, people not parrots,” when explaining that there are three layers in the Gospel texts: “original, developmental, and compositional layers.”<sup>1</sup> If we deem the tradition in the form of sayings or maxims to be more of raw material closer to the

---

<sup>1</sup> John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2010), 42.

“original,” the narrative pericopae are more likely to include the latter two (developmental and compositional layers), where the authors were influenced by their religious/cultural backgrounds and by the political stances of the communities that they belonged to and interacted with.

Mark 7:1–23 as a narrative pericope contains a saying tradition often termed “purity logion”<sup>2</sup>: “οὐδέν ἐστιν ἑξωθεν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἰσπορευόμενον εἰς αὐτὸν ὃ δύναται κοινῶσαι αὐτόν ἀλλὰ τὰ ἐκ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐκπορευόμενά ἐστιν τὰ κοινῶντα τὸν ἄνθρωπον” (v. 15). Mark with this maxim formulates a narrative pericope, in which Mark employs several characters such as Jesus, the Pharisees and some scribes, Jesus’s disciples, and the crowd. Mark also has Jesus quote Isaiah and Moses as a way of criticizing the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, and at the end lists some Stoic vice as an expository commentary to the second part of the saying, thus completing his narrative pericope. In this way, Mark 7:1–23 contains the original layer, upon which Mark laid his developmental and compositional layers. However, is the original layer here authentic to Jesus?

There are criteria for determining the authenticity of the sayings ascribed to Jesus, suggested by scholars who research the historical Jesus. An important one among them is the criterion of double dissimilarity, against which a saying is checked if it is unique to Jesus, distinct from the Jewish traditions and also from Christian traditions. According to Stanley E. Porter, it was accidentally suggested by Bultmann only for the similitudes of

---

<sup>2</sup> Christian Stettler, “Purity of Heart in Jesus’ Teaching: Mark 7:14-23 Par. as an Expression of Jesus’ Basileia Ethics,” *JTS* 55.2 (2004): 467.

Jesus but taken further by Ernst Käsemann for a general application.<sup>3</sup> More recently, Norman Perrin reiterates the criterion: “[...] material may be ascribed to Jesus only if it can be shown to be distinctive of him, which usually will mean dissimilar to known tendencies in Judaism before him or the church after him.”<sup>4</sup> This criterion has its innate limit not only because it requires an unbiased and comprehensive understanding of Jesus’s contemporary Judaism and of the early church, but also because it imagines a clear-cut discontinuity between Judaism and Jesus, and between Jesus and the church. However, despite its limitations, it certainly points in a logically sound direction, and can be used to argue for the authenticity of a few sayings. Mark 7:15 meets this criterion, since no Jewish sect at the time of Jesus would have produced such saying, since keeping the food laws was considered a critical part of keeping their Jewish identity and the early church in Jerusalem with its Jewish roots would not have produced it, either; therefore, unless Jesus had actually spoken it, it would not have been circulated at all.

Another sound criterion is the criterion of coherence or consistency, which states that “material that coheres or is consistent with previously established authentic material should also be regarded authentic.”<sup>5</sup> This same logic can be applied to determine the authenticity of Mark 7:15 not in relation to other sayings of Jesus but in relation to Peter’s behavior attested in Gal 2:12. According to Riley, Peter as a Jew would have had

---

<sup>3</sup> Stanley E. Porter, *The Criteria for Authenticity in Historical-Jesus Research: Previous Discussion and New Proposals*, Journal of the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 191 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 70–73.

<sup>4</sup> Norman Perrin, *What Is Redaction Criticism?* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2002), 71.

<sup>5</sup> Porter, *Criteria for Authenticity*, 79.



no reason to eat with the gentiles unless he had been taught to do so by Jesus.<sup>6</sup> The behavioral phenomenon demonstrated by one of Jesus's first disciples as an attestation to the contents of Jesus's teaching is coherent with the core message of Mark 7:15, thus adding more plausibility to its authenticity.

However, James D. G. Dunn finds these two criteria to be insufficient in determining the authenticity of the purity logion due to its radicalness. According to Dunn, the saying is so radical that it easily meets the criterion of dissimilarity, but the same radicalness also calls for a "counter-suspicion" that "gentile Christian influence has sharpened a less radical saying."<sup>7</sup> Dunn also suggests that the criterion of coherence is not met by the saying due to its extreme radicalness that does not cohere with other less radical sayings of Jesus. Dunn writes, "it [the purity logion] would 'cohere' more readily in a less radical form."<sup>8</sup> However, he still argues for the authenticity of the purity logion with two other criteria: the criterion of Semitic (Aramaic) language phenomena and the criterion of multiple attestation. First, he detects some traces of an Aramaic *Vorlage*, such as the antithetic parallelism, which is characteristic of Hebrew poetry or proverbial speech, and the terms reflecting Semitism such as κοινῶσαι, arguing that the saying as a whole looks like a typical Jewish proverb or mashal, which is characteristic of Jesus's

---

<sup>6</sup> Gregory J. Riley, "Jesus the Teacher" (Claremont: Claremont School of Theology, 2012). This point has been repeatedly suggested by Riley, and I find it convincing.

<sup>7</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990), 38.

<sup>8</sup> Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, 39.

own teaching style.<sup>9</sup> He also suggests Matt 15:11, *Gos. Thom.* 14:5, and Mark 7:18b and v. 20 as other attestations of Mark 7:15, though arguing that Mark 7:15 had been radicalized by Mark from the original form that is found in the other places.<sup>10</sup> In short, Dunn suggests three important points: 1) There was the Aramaic *Vorlage* of the purity logion that goes back to the historical Jesus; 2) Matt 15:11 and *Gos. Thom.* 14 attest to its antithetic parallelism; and 3) Mark compromised the logion's original form by employing "οὐδέν ἐστιν" in v. 15, but still preserves it in the bisected form in v. 18 and in v. 20.

The fact that Matthew opted to ignore the Markan version and to preserve the antithetic version of the saying in Matt 15:11 while preserving the Markan context for the saying suggests two possibilities: Either Matthew had a written source for the saying, or its oral tradition was well known before Matthew encountered its written form in Mark. Since Luke does not preserve the saying, the version of Q that is strictly based on the two-source hypothesis does not present it. Considering Q's Jewish characteristics, it should not be surprising not to find the logion in Q. The community that produced Q can technically be viewed as a sect of Second Temple Judaism, at least in its initial phase until they were viewed as "others" with distinct nomenclatures such as Christian. Despite the efforts to overcome the limits of a legalistic approach to Judaism, the Q community still must have found themselves on the boundary of Second Temple Judaism, engaging in debates with its peer Jewish sects, especially the Pharisees. A major issue of discussion among the sects of Second Temple Judaism was about what made them Jews, which

---

<sup>9</sup> Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, 41–42.

<sup>10</sup> Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, 42.

included food regulations. The significance of food regulations at the time of Second Temple Judaism in terms of keeping the Jewish faith cannot be overstated, as attested in the martyrdom stories of Eleazar and seven Jewish brothers, recorded in 2 Maccabees 6–7 (supposedly written during the first century BCE). The *Book of Jubilees* (135–105 BCE) also has Abraham warn Jacob to separate from the gentiles and not to eat with them (22:16). The biblical book of Daniel also begins with the motif of rejecting the gentile food (1:8–16). Günter Stemberger even suggests that “the enactment of food laws is supposed to have had an enormous impact on Jewish history, namely the outbreak of the great revolt against Rome in 70 [C.E].”<sup>11</sup> The logical implication of the logion, which Mark clarifies in 7:19, must have been unacceptable to any pious Jew at the time. Thus, the logion might have been excluded in Q, despite its circulation as an oral tradition. Whether Q had it or not, the fact that Matthew has the logion in different form from Mark’s makes it all the more likely that in whatever form the logion was circulated among the early Christian communities.

*Gos. Thom.* 14:5 is another good witness to the logion. Riley proves that the *Gospel of Thomas* precedes Luke by demonstrating that *Gos. Thom.* 72 and 47 influenced Luke 12:13–14 and 5:39 respectively.<sup>12</sup> Regarding *Gos. Thom.* 47, Riley denies the possibility that the author of *Gos. Thom.* relied on Mark, but “both Mark and Thomas

---

<sup>11</sup> Benedikt Eckhardt et al., *Jewish Identity and Politics between the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba: Groups, Normativity, and Rituals*, ed. Benedikt Eckhardt (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 209.

<sup>12</sup> Gregory J. Riley, “Influence of Thomas Christianity on Luke 12:14 and 5:39,” *Harv. Theol. Rev.* 88.2 (1995): 230–34.

inherited the saying from pre-Markan tradition,”<sup>13</sup> opening up the possibility that the author of the *Gos. Thom.* might preserve the materials that belonged to that pre-Markan tradition, which Mark might have redacted. In other words, when it comes to the shared contents of Mark and *Thomas*, it is not impossible that the author of *Thomas* preserves the version that is closer to the original than Mark’s would be, especially considering Mark’s tendency of creative redaction, involving the heavy narrative contextualization, whereas *Gos. Thom.* is seen to have the same genre as Q, the genre that Mark loves to transform into narratives.

Regarding Mark 7:15, John Horman, based on his hypothesis that there was a common written Greek source for Mark and *Gos. Thom.*, suggests that the author of *Gos. Thom.* knew the earlier version of the logion, which Mark freely redacted.<sup>14</sup> He argues that *Gos. Thom.* 14 consists of the three elements that are put together: 1) *Thom* 14:1–3, which “are likely to be Thomas’s own composition” which corresponds to “the first three exhortations of the disciples” in *Gos. Thom.* 6; 2) 14:4, which breaks the pattern of vv. 1–3 and seems to have been employed from “a reasonably well-known saying of Jesus,” which Luke 10:8–9 also has, to justify the previous three verses; and 14:5, the purity logion.<sup>15</sup> Regarding the first part, Petr Pokorný further suggests that the first half of *Gos.*

---

<sup>13</sup> Riley, “Influence of Thomas Christianity,” 234n9.

<sup>14</sup> John Horman, *A Common Written Greek Source for Mark and Thomas* (Waterloo, Ont: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2011), 96.

<sup>15</sup> Horman, *Common Written Greek Source*, 94.

*Thom.* 6 and the first half of *Gos. Thom.* 14 were originally put together.<sup>16</sup> This in turn suggests that *Gos. Thom.* 14:4–5 should be dealt with separately from vv. 1–3. Just as Horman indicates that 14:4 and 14:5 were put together by the author of *Thomas*, April D. DeConick also suggests that 14:4 is a “Kernel saying” due to its original function as “an injunction for the Christian Jewish missionary to expect support from those Jews whom he was healing and converting,”<sup>17</sup> while 14:5 is an accretion added later because the saying’s “intent is to explain an ideology and activity reflecting post-50 CE Christianity.”<sup>18</sup> Considering that Paul uses the tradition contained in *Gos. Thom.* 14:4 in 1 Cor 10:27 without mentioning the purity logion, and that Luke 10:8–9 also does the same, the observation that 14:4 originally was not the setting for the purity logion should be accepted. This observation might seem to reduce the purity logion to be a mere invention of the early church, as DeConick’s term “accretion” suggests.<sup>19</sup> However, the Jerusalem church as a Jewish community would not have had a reason to produce such a saying unless Jesus actually had spoken it, while the newly emerging gentile Christians would not have been able to come up with an Aramaic saying that presents such a complete antithetical parallelism. The purity logion might have found its place in *Thomas* later than its initial components did, but the authenticity of the purity logion still stands

---

<sup>16</sup> Petr Pokorný, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Thomas: From Interpretations to the Interpreted* (New York: T&T Clark International, 2009), 58.

<sup>17</sup> April D. DeConick, *The Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation: With a Commentary and New English Translation of the Complete Gospel*, Early Christianity in Context (London: T&T Clark International, 2006), 89.

<sup>18</sup> DeConick, *The Original Gospel of Thomas*, 90.

<sup>19</sup> DeConick, *The Original Gospel of Thomas*, 8–9.

due to its detected traces of the Aramaic *Vorlage* that cannot be ascribed to a gentile community and its distinct radicalness that cannot be ascribed to Judaism or to the early church.

There is also a trace of the purity logion in the Pauline epistles. Paul says in Rom 14:14, “I know and have been persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing in itself is unclean, but only to the one who thinks something to be unclean, that is unclean.” Robert Jewett suggests that Paul cites “from the dominical tradition.”<sup>20</sup> He argues that the consecutive sequence of the verbs “οἶδα” and “πέπεισμαι” indicates that in Paul’s mind “the certain ‘knowledge’ that a believer has ‘by [the] Lord Jesus’[s] produces persuasion that convinces.”<sup>21</sup> Considering that there exist quite a few Pauline passages that refer to or echo the Jesus tradition,<sup>22</sup> and that Paul often even skips to mention the source, it seems likely that the emphatic reference to Jesus points to the possibility that Paul intends to let the readers be aware that he is citing Jesus, appealing to the better *ethos* than his. And if Paul indeed refers to the then circulated purity logion here, Mark’s radicalization of the saying by using “οὐδέν ἐστιν” might have been influenced by Paul’s loose rendition of the tradition in Rom 14:14.

---

<sup>20</sup> Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 859.

<sup>21</sup> Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, 859.

<sup>22</sup> Heinz Arnold Hiestermann, “Paul’s Use of the Synoptic Jesus Tradition” (University of Pretoria, 2016), 74-76, 84-87. Hiestermann offers a rather complete list of possible parallels between Paul and the Jesus tradition.

### 5.3. What is the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark 7:1–23?

For the sake of my argument, figuring out the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark 7:1–23 is just as important as determining the authenticity of the purity logion. The purity logion due to its innate ultimate authority as a supposedly dominical tradition is employed to put an end to the ongoing debate caused by a certain situation, which is reenacted in the pericope. Without identifying the situation that called for the employment of the purity logion, the particular form and content that Mark uses in composing cannot be understood correctly. Why barrage the Pharisees when the audience was barely familiar with them? Why did the Pharisees have to have come from Jerusalem? Why “some scribes” are attached to the Pharisees when the Pharisees would suffice? All these questions that have remained unanswered might be answered better if the polemical situation behind the pericope is identified. Most importantly, what Mark wants to say in the pericope should be understood more accurately.

Mark 7:1–23 on the surface seems to deal with the contention that Jesus had with the Pharisees. However, did the historical Pharisees really interact with Jesus as to have had conflicts to be recorded? An important fact about Jesus’s conflicts with the Pharisees is that Mark is the first one to have recorded them, and Matthew intensified them while Luke moderated them, reflecting the changes in the relationship dynamics between the Gospel authors and the group that represented the Pharisaism, as Donald E. Cook suggests.<sup>23</sup> However, if Mark had actually concocted Jesus’s conflicts with the Pharisees

---

<sup>23</sup> Donald E. Cook, “A Gospel Portrait of the Pharisees,” *RevExp* 84.2 (1978): 221–33.

for a rhetorical reason, the ecclesiastical animosity against the Pharisees based on their conflicts with the historical Jesus loses its historical basis. E. P. Sanders does not accept the historicity of Jesus's conflicts with the Pharisees, suggesting that Mark's depiction of the Pharisees is ahistorical.<sup>24</sup> Sanders says, "Pharisees did not organize themselves into groups to spend their Sabbaths in Galilean cornfields in the hope of catching someone transgressing (Mark 2.23f.), nor is it credible that scribes and Pharisees made a special trip to Galilee from Jerusalem to inspect Jesus's disciples' hands (Mark 7.1f.)."<sup>25</sup> His argument is biased by his interest in understanding the historical Jesus within the category of the Second Temple Judaism. He even insinuates that Jesus did not transgress the Sabbath law, since technically "the laying on of hands (Luke 13.13) is not work, and no physical action of any kind is reported in the other stories [regarding Jesus's healing on the Sabbath]."<sup>26</sup>

However, his critical observation of Mark 7:1–23 is worth paying attention to. Sanders first asserts that handwashing "is not a biblical requirement for the laity," and that while the group called *haberim* "undertook to observe special purity rules, there is no evidence that they thought that those who did not do so were sinners, and there would certainly be no reason to single out Jesus'[s] disciples for criticism."<sup>27</sup> He also points out that the issue of handwashing "slides into a discourse on food, which is quite a different

---

<sup>24</sup> Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 265.

<sup>25</sup> Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 265.

<sup>26</sup> Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 266.

<sup>27</sup> Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 265.



matter in Jewish law,” underlining “the artificiality of the connection.”<sup>28</sup> Regarding the view that Mark 7:15 is a reply to the question regarding the handwashing in 7:5, Sanders is decisively negative, saying, “‘What goes in’ must surely be the food itself—nothing else goes in and comes out—, and the statement [Mark 7:15] does not respond to the question of whether or not Jesus’[s] disciples should become *haberim*, laypeople who accept special purity rules.”<sup>29</sup> His rejection of the historicity of the pericope seems to have affected his rejection of the authenticity of the purity logion, which he ultimately bases on the supposed incompatibility of the logion with “the positions of the ‘false brethren’, Peter and James”<sup>30</sup> in the situation described in Gal 2:11–14. However, he neglects the fact that Peter, even for a moment, ate with the gentiles, thus missing the important basis to argue for the authenticity of Mark 7:15. Still, his skepticism on the setting of Mark 7:1–23 is well founded. Though Dunn thinks that “Sanders’ resort to sarcasm” weakens Sanders’ argument,<sup>31</sup> if one can overlook the sarcasm, Sander’s argument regarding the unlikely setting of the pericope sounds reasonable considering his new understanding of the first-century Palestinian Judaism reached through his thorough research on the Judaism contemporary with Jesus. Sanders demonstrates how the persistent view of Rabbinic religion as one of legalistic works-righteousness is not based

---

<sup>28</sup> Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 266.

<sup>29</sup> Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 266.

<sup>30</sup> Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 266.

<sup>31</sup> James D. G. Dunn, “Jesus and Purity: An Ongoing Debate,” *New Testam. Stud.* 48.4 (2002): 462, [http://www.journals.cambridge.org/abstract\\_S0028688502000279](http://www.journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0028688502000279).

on the historical evidence but on the biased and eclectic interpretation of Paul's soteriological argument.<sup>32</sup>

If one agrees with Sanders on his argument that the setting for Mark 7:1–23 is ahistorical and it was not the historical Pharisees that were behind the scene of Mark 7:1–23, what would be the reason for Mark to undertake to feature the character of Pharisees, despite having to explain in detail the customs of “the Pharisees and all the Jews” (7:3) to his target audience? There are some logical conclusions that one can make if one believes that the target audience did not know much about the Pharisees. First, there is no practical reason for Mark to criticize the Pharisees in front of the target audience since the audience did not know much about the Pharisees. Second, if Mark's purpose was merely to record the historical contention between Jesus and the Pharisees through this pericope, the extraordinary artificiality of the composition that weakens the historicity of the pericope has to be explained.<sup>33</sup> If Mark was not concerned about the historicity of the pericope, there must have been other (rhetorical) purposes in composing the pericope. Third, even though the characters of Pharisees and scribes themselves were not the figures relevant to the target audience, the subject that the pericope deals with was not only relevant but crucial, thus revealing the true purpose of the composition: to provide the answer for the food debate that was going on among the target audience. One

---

<sup>32</sup> E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 1–12.

<sup>33</sup> Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 265.

question still remains: Why bring up the Pharisees while one can address the issue of the food law without mentioning them?

My thesis is that the character of “the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem” in Mark 7:1–23 has been employed as a caricature to criticize the Jewish Christians of the kind similar to or identical with the ones whose hypocrisy prompted Paul to rebuke Peter, as mentioned in Gal 2:11–14. Mark conceals the subject with the help of the character of the Pharisees, while providing some textual hints to his target audience regarding the real subject that is being criticized in the pericope. Thus, the pericope can be characterized as a hidden polemic based on the definition and criteria of the hidden polemic that Yairah Amit provides.<sup>34</sup> Amit suggests that the basic reason why one utilizes the techniques of hidden polemic is rhetorical: to persuade better.<sup>35</sup> This inherent persuasive trait of hidden polemic leads to rhetorical criticism. From the perspective of rhetorical criticism, Mark 7:1–23 is a rhetorical unit. Overall the pericope functions as judicial rhetoric since it has a judicial setting, where a prosecution is made (v. 5) and a verdict is given (v. 19c). It still makes use of both epideictic rhetoric and deliberative rhetoric since it not only criticizes (epideictic) but also exhorts (deliberative). This pericope as rhetoric has the purpose of persuasion and makes use of the hidden polemic to maximize the effect of persuasion. When its hidden polemic is secretly revealed through the literary signs and eventually becomes grasped by the target

---

<sup>34</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 93–98.

<sup>35</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 97.

audience, the audience is compelled to be persuaded with certain catharsis that comes along with realizing the real subject of the discourse.

#### 5.4. A Hidden Polemic in Mark 7:1–23

Yairah Amit in her book *Hidden Polemics in Biblical Narrative* characterizes the Hebrew Bible as polemical. She writes, “One of the striking characteristics of biblical literature is its polemical tendency.”<sup>36</sup> She argues that the Hebrew Bible was formulated to have a polemical tendency because it was formulated by the community of Israel which constantly had struggles both internally and externally: internally “among different ideological streams and schools, operating at times alongside one another and at others in the wake of one another, and which in any event wished to leave their impression upon the spiritual and social life of Israel,” and externally “with the general culture that surrounded it [the community of Israel], which to a large extent served as the cause and motivation for its creation [biblical literature].”<sup>37</sup>

The observation that the contentions and struggles give birth to polemical literature can be applied to the books of the New Testament. It seems that the early Christians also experienced contentions and struggles both internally and externally. Internal contentions among various early Christian sects, each of which interpreted the person and the teachings of Jesus differently, gave birth to the diverse expressions of

---

<sup>36</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 3.

<sup>37</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 3.

Christianity in which many polemics against one another are found. The most obvious internal conflict within Christianity would be the one between early Jewish Christianity and Pauline Christianity, which gave birth to the Pauline letters, most of which are explicitly polemical. But there were other factions, too. Gregory J. Riley provides a good example of an internal contention within Christianity between Johannine Christianity and Thomas Christianity over the issue of resurrection, which shaped some parts of the Gospel of John.<sup>38</sup> Externally, Christianity had to deal with the unfriendly environments such as imperial cult, which gave birth to the polemical works of the New Testament such as the Book of Revelation. The Gospel of Mark was shaped to be polemical just like many other books of the New Testament. It was dealing with both internal contention and external struggle. Mark 7:1–23, as an integral part of the Gospel, also seems to have been written to be polemical as a result of an external contention, if we deem Pharisaism as external to Christianity. My suggestion, however, has been that it was not the contention between Jesus and the Pharisees that prompted Mark to generate the polemical pericope of Mark 7:1–23. If it was not the contention between Jesus and the Pharisees, what was the struggle that prompted Mark to come up with such a polemic? And what kind of polemic was formed in Mark 7:1–23 as the result of that struggle?

Amit lists three kinds of polemic: explicit, implicit, and hidden. In an explicit polemic, the subject of the polemic is directly mentioned and the author's stance regarding the issue is also explicitly expressed "by the narrator or by means of a

---

<sup>38</sup> Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 106–26.

statement of one of the reliable figures in the story.”<sup>39</sup> Does Mark 7:1–23 refer to the subject of its polemic? It seems so. But technically speaking, not initially. The subject of the surface-level polemic introduced by the Pharisees is about how to eat, not what to eat. The statement of the reliable figure of Jesus in v. 15, however, *is* about what to eat. Regarding the subject of food, the conclusion of the polemic is explicit and clear. But the difference between the two different purity issues is still detectable enough to cause the audience to ask: Is it still about washing one’s hands? Nevertheless, if one sees the food debate as the subject of the polemic, despite the difference between the two purity issues, both the subject of the polemic and the author’s stance are explicitly expressed, thus leaving no need for the audience to look for the conclusion.

An implicit polemic reveals its subject explicitly, “but the stance taken therein is expressed by indirect means alone,”<sup>40</sup> such as various components that constitute the story. This does not mean that the polemic does not have a clear stance on the issue. Its indirect means of revealing the stance, since it lures the audience to engage more actively in the polemic, rather enhances the effect of persuasion when the audience figures out what the stance of the author is. While encountering an implicit polemic, the audience may find the stance ambivalent at first. But as the audience finds that the author leans toward a certain stance, they are more likely to lean toward the same stance since they followed the narrative longer and more empathically than they would with an explicit polemic.

---

<sup>39</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 56.

<sup>40</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 57.

This element of eventual realization is more dramatically realized in a hidden polemic because it involves the subject itself. A hidden polemic does not mention its subject explicitly, or its subject “is not mentioned in the expected, conventional formulation.”<sup>41</sup> In order to formulate a hidden polemic, “a double effort” is made: hiding the real subject of the polemic while leaving the signs that will lead the audience to the real subject of the polemic.<sup>42</sup> Amit explains more about the signs: “The signs serve as both ruses to bypass explicit mention of the subject, as well as techniques of defamiliarization—that is, linguistic techniques to distract the reader, taking him away from the routine process of reading and turning his attention toward those phenomena in which the author is interested, such as the presence of a concealed polemic.”<sup>43</sup> If Mark uses the technique of defamiliarization, the most unfamiliar figure to the audience of Mark 7:1–23 would be the Pharisees, since Mark had to explain about their custom of washing to his target audience. And Mark underlines the excessiveness of the Pharisaic purity ritual and claims that all the Jews do the same. This claim probably is a hyperbole and the audience must have detected Mark’s radical generalization. Even as a gentile-Christian,<sup>44</sup> they must have contacted some Jewish Christians firsthand. If the firsthand experience that the audience had with their Jewish fellow-believers was not identical with

---

<sup>41</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 93.

<sup>42</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 93.

<sup>43</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 93n1. Amit in the footnote mentions “the existence of the phenomenon of defamiliarization of estrangement” recognized by Aristotle.

<sup>44</sup> It becomes quite clear that Mark’s target audience was a gentile-Christian community in that Mark excludes all the Jews from his expected audience by accusing all the Jews of having those excessive purity rules

Mark's blunt claim, what Mark says should be qualified as a technique of defamiliarization according to Amit's definition.<sup>45</sup>

Regarding the motivations for the use of the technique of hidden polemics, Amit says, "The first is rhetorical: the benefits derived from the use of indirect means of persuasion," while also mentioning that "Hidden polemic also serves the needs of 'censorship.'"<sup>46</sup> If Mark indeed used the technique of the hidden polemics in Mark 7:1–23, it suggests that "at a certain stage" of writing the Gospel "there was a need or wish to conceal the subject of the polemic."<sup>47</sup> If Mark's audience was maintaining a relationship with the early Jewish-Christian community and if that relationship was not an equal one but one between the supervisors and a religious colony (an object of Christian-Judaizing), then a strong need to hide the polemic must have existed. However, considering Mark's implicit but still very blunt denigration of the Jewish disciples as worldly ambitious cowards, one might conjecture that there was another strong voice that evens out the imbalance of power between the two groups. This might remind the readers of Paul's rhetoric of advocating his apostleship in several places in his epistles. Mark did not need to forge a hidden polemic so much as the author of Revelation or the author of 1 Peter

---

<sup>45</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 93n1. The technique of defamiliarization as this is found in 1 Corinthians as Paul talks about the unlikely factions in the Corinthian congregations as he secretly targets the opponent that he never mentions or directly speaks to until 4:7.

<sup>46</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 97.

<sup>47</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 94.



needed to encrypt the name of the empire that needed to fall (cf. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 2.15).<sup>48</sup>

Regarding the possible double layers of understanding, which can be created by the embedded hidden polemic, Amit says, “the discovery of a concealed polemic gives the text an added dimension of depth, while failure to discover it does not detract from its understanding on the explicit or implicit levels.”<sup>49</sup> Mark 7:1–23 has been read without detecting the hidden polemic within it. The text has not been deemed mysterious since the subject and the author’s stance were clear on the surface. However, if the discovery of a concealed polemic can be made, the unanswered questions such as “Why did the Pharisees and some of the scribes have to come from Jerusalem?” or rather “Why did Mark have the Pharisees and some of the scribes come from Jerusalem?” might be answered with more satisfaction.

There are criteria that Amit suggests for determining whether a text has a hidden polemic or not.<sup>50</sup> First, are there other biblical passages which deal explicitly with the suspected hidden polemic? This leads to an intertextual approach. Second, does the text present a series of textual signals that point to the hidden polemic? Amit says, “The claim of the existence of a hidden polemic in a given text has greater weight if it is possible to

---

<sup>48</sup> Eusebius is convinced that the author of 1 Peter refers to Rome as Babylon. Eusebius Pamphili, *Ecclesiastical History: Books 1–5*, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, *The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953), 110.

<sup>49</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 94.

<sup>50</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 94–96.

note a series of signs, or one striking, unmistakable sign, that points toward a polemic.”<sup>51</sup> These internal literary signs become more evident when they are found in other passages which are suspected to have an intertextual relationship with the given passage. Third, has there been any commentator who supports the finding of the hidden polemic in the exegetical tradition? In the case of Mark 7:1–23, I do not know of any commentator that claims that the character of the Pharisees was used as a caricature to denigrate the Jewish Christians. This lack of support by the exegetical tradition may mean the failure to meet the suggested criterion but might point to the originality and contribution of the dissertation.

### 5.5. An Intertextual Approach

My hypothesis is that there is a strong possibility that Mark was aware of the contention between gentile Christians and some Jewish Christians over the issue of food laws. This contention has been reenacted by Paul in Gal 2:11–16, in which Paul reports that Peter was eating with the gentiles but separated himself from them when certain men from James came and condemned him. Mark seems to have known of this conflict between Paul and Peter, which might have circulated as an anecdote regarding well-known figures of first-century Christianity and might have reenacted a similar situation in Mark 7:1–23. Also, Mark’s assumption regarding his target audience includes that they had already heard the anecdote regarding the conflict between Paul and Peter, as reported

---

<sup>51</sup> Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 97.

from Paul's perspective as it is in Galatians. This suggestion is more than a conjecture, since a close relationship between the Pauline tradition and Mark had been demonstrated to exist in the previous chapter. A close comparison between Gal 2:11-16 and Mark 7:1-23 will reveal more possibility for the *traditional*, not necessarily literary, connection between the two. Considering the relatively early date of Mark's writing, the kind of tension similar to or inherited from the one among Paul, Peter, and the people from James might have been still going on between the Jewish Christians and the gentile Christian communities, perhaps in a further developed form, motivating Mark to address the issue.

Dunn finds some interesting spots in Gal 2:11–14 that echo some expressions in Mark 7:1–23, inadvertently revealing intertextual relationship between the two texts. Dunn argues that the expression “Cephas separated himself” can be paraphrased as “Cephas played the Pharisee,” because the name Pharisee means separated one and also because the Pharisees “separated themselves from others precisely in the matter of table fellowship, for reasons of purity.”<sup>52</sup> Dunn also points out how the verb ὀρθοποδεῖν in v. 14 as a *hapax legomenon* is a typical Jewish concept that can be translated as הלך, which also can be translated into the Greek verb περιπατεῖν, which appears in Mark 7:5. If Mark uses Galatians as an antetext, his use of the verb more commonly used instead of the *hapax legomenon* is understandable. What Dunn wants to underline here is that Paul is engaging in an intra-Jewish halakhic dispute, which, by the way, the dispute between the Pharisees and Jesus in Mark 7:1–23 is, too.

---

<sup>52</sup> Dunn, “Echoes of Intra-Jewish Polemic,” 460.

Besides these keen observations, there are other lexical and semantic links between the two passages. If Peter was “playing the Pharisee,” as Dunn suggested above, who was he imitating? It was “certain (τινας) ones from James” as attested in Gal 2:21, which might correspond to “the Pharisees and certain (τινες) scribes, having come from Jerusalem.” Interestingly enough, the same indefinite pronoun has been used in both cases. Also, since James happened to be in Jerusalem at the time when “certain ones from James” came to Antioch in Gal 2:21, they are considered to have come from Jerusalem, just as the Pharisees and certain scribes came from Jerusalem in Mark 7:1. Also, Paul’s statement in Gal 2:13 that “the rest of the Jews” and “even Barnabas” acted hypocritically may explain Mark’s far-fetched, historically inaccurate generalization of the Jewish custom of washing expressed in the phrase “πάντες οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι.”<sup>53</sup> Lastly, Jesus calls the Pharisees hypocrites in Mark 7:6, which is the only place where Mark uses the word “hypocrite” (cf. Mark 12:15), just as Paul accuses the Jews in Antioch of their hypocrisy (Gal 2:13). Considering how rarely the word “hypocrisy” and its cognates appear both in Mark (7:6; 12:15) and the Pauline epistles (Gal 2:13), it becomes hard not to sense a intertextual relationship between the two passages.

One might say that these lexical or semantic correlations are due to oral tradition or other means without the actual Epistle to the Galatians and not enough to suggest one as an antetext of the other. Such skepticism is justified and should lead us to rhetorical criticism. Rhetorical criticism equips us with the analytic tools with which we can do

---

<sup>53</sup> Robert A. Guelich, *Mark 1-8:26*, WBC (Waco: Word Books, 1989), 363–64. Robert A. Guelich point out the historical inaccuracy of the phrase “all the Jews,” arguing that only the Pharisees and the Essenes “were so concerned about purity.”

more than just lexical analysis of a given text. It allows us to identify the rhetorical setting and purpose, which in turn provide more hints regarding the *Sitz im Leben* of the text. For example, a polemic as a rhetoric presupposes a polemical setting, which requires at least a subject and two different parties. The kind of specificity that any polemical setting retains makes it hard for the same polemical setting to be reenacted unless among the same parties over the same subject. A rhetorical critical analysis can determine how the two documents are related by identifying and comparing their polemical settings and positions.

## 5.6. A Rhetorical-Critical Analysis

Now we will analyze Mark 7:1–23 and its supposed antetext Gal 2:11–16 from a rhetorical-critical perspective. Regarding the universal factors of a rhetoric (speaker, audience, and discourse), both passages have the bringer of the gospel as the speaker, a gentile Christian community as the audience, the issue of table fellowship as the subject of discourse. Gal 2:11–16 has Paul himself as the speaker while Mark 7:1–23 uses the character of Jesus as the speaker. The problem that Paul had was that he lacked the kind of authority that the Jewish apostles in Jerusalem have as the firsthand disciples of Jesus. In order to establish the kind of authority that he needed to persuade his audience of his *logos*, Paul emphasizes two things: directness and independence. Paul claims to represent Jesus as “an apostle” “through Jesus Christ” and “not from men nor through man” (Gal 1:1). Paul keeps emphasizing that there has been no middle person between himself and Jesus Christ, arguing that his gospel was not of human origin (1:11) but through the

revelation of Jesus Christ (1:12, 16), and that he was not influenced by the Jewish apostles in Jerusalem regarding the contents of his gospel. After he had the revelation of God's Son (1:16) he went directly to Arabia, then to Damascus, and only after three years went to Jerusalem for the first time to meet with Peter (1:17–18). This kind of directness that does not allow a middle man between Jesus and Paul allows Paul to claim to be not only independent from the Jewish disciples and but also equal to them in authority (1:19–20; 2:2, 6–10). In addition, Paul presents himself as entrusted by Jesus with the gospel to the gentiles, preventing Peter from having any influence over the Galatians since he was not sent to them (2:7–8).

Mark establishes the authority for Jesus in a similar fashion. Jesus after the revelation regarding his divine sonship (Mark 1:9–11; cf. Gal 1:16) went to the desert (Mark 1:12–13; cf. Gal 1:16b–17), corresponding to Paul's itinerary to Arabia. Though baptized by John the Baptist, Jesus's ministry was independent from John and even more influential than his, since the extent of John's influence was limited to the region of Judea and Jerusalem (Mark 1:5) while that of Jesus was extended to Idumea, beyond Jordan, and Tyre and Sidon (3:8). Even before Jesus went over to Tyre and Sidon (7:31), the gentiles are said to have been coming from those regions to Jesus at the early stage of his ministry. The relationship between John and Jesus in terms of their extent of influence can be compared to the relationship between Peter and Paul in terms of their target of mission. Jesus in Mark as the original bringer of the gospel to the gentile Christian audience holds stronger respect toward them compared to other messengers such as scribes (1:22) or other Jewish sects, just as Paul was compared to Peter in Galatians (1:7–8).

Both Mark's audience and the recipients of Galatians are gentile Christians, who are troubled by the legalism of Jewish Christians. Paul reveals that his audience had been affected by "some" who troubled them with a different gospel than Paul's (1:6). Regarding the identity of these trouble-makers, Richard N. Longenecker, after reviewing different suggestions, concludes that "Paul's opponents were Jewish Christian—or, more accurately, Christian Jews—who came from [the] Jerusalem church to Paul's churches in Galatia with a message stressing the need for gentiles to be circumcised and to keep the rudiments of the cultic calendar, both for full acceptance by God and as a proper Christian lifestyle."<sup>54</sup> This is not so different from F. C. Baur's view in 1845 that they were the "zealous Jewish Christians from Jerusalem, who were unopposed by the Jerusalem apostles, infiltrated his [Paul's] churches in order to complete the work of conversion by imposing on the gentiles the requirements of the Jewish law."<sup>55</sup> While "the opening statement of 1:6–9 and the postscript of 6:11–18" give "the closest thing we get to a clear description of Paul's opponents in Galatians,"<sup>56</sup> Paul's reenactment of the Antiochene conflict instigated by the people "from James" (Gal 1:12) should also be seen as a straightforward hint for Paul's opponents' identity. The problem that was not resolved in Antioch had extended itself further north. In Paul's mind, the sort of judaizing attempt in Galatia that involved circumcision was not so different in kind from the sort of hypocrisy over the table fellowship that he experienced in Antioch. Thus, Paul uses the

---

<sup>54</sup> Longenecker, *Galatians*, xcv.

<sup>55</sup> Longenecker, *Galatians*, xc. Baur's position is paraphrased from his book *Paul: His Life and Works*, 1:105-46, 250-57.

<sup>56</sup> Longenecker, *Galatians*, xcv.

episode of conflict with Peter as a way of illustrating the problem that is to be dealt with in the upcoming soteriological discourse.

The *pathos* that might have been created among the gentile Christians in Antioch when the conflict happened might represent the *pathos* of other gentile Christian groups that had to deal with the judaizing attempt by some Jewish Christians. According to John P. Meyer, the relationship between the Antioch church and the Jerusalem church was “not one of complete equality.”<sup>57</sup> He says, “A critical reading of the data in both Acts and Paul suggests that Jerusalem had a certain authority over Antioch and indeed, for all his protestations, even over Paul.”<sup>58</sup> And the basis of that authority assumed by the leaders of the Jerusalem Church was their claim to own the Jesus tradition based on the firsthand discipleship and kinship to Jesus, represented by the figures such as Peter and James. This irreversible Jewish upper hand must have caused any gentile Christian group to feel powerless when it came to any theological debate that required a reference by the historical Jesus. That powerlessness must have constituted an important part of the *pathos* of the Galatian recipients. As a gentile Christian group which was contemporary of the changing dynamics between the Jewish Christians and the gentile Christians up until 70 CE, Mark’s audience also must have had experienced the influence of the Jewish Christians from Jerusalem whether directly or indirectly. Raymond E. Brown points out that even the moderate “Apostolic Decree” in Acts 15:20–29 reflects how the gentile

---

<sup>57</sup> Raymond E. Brown and John P. Meier, *Antioch and Rome: New Testament Cradles of Catholic Christianity* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1983), 40.

<sup>58</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 39.



Christians were classified as “resident aliens,” which is still implicitly insulting.<sup>59</sup> This condescension over the gentile Christians was so deeply rooted and pervasive that it is reflected in Rom 11:11–24, where even “the apostle to the gentiles” (v. 13) likens the gentile Christians to “a wild olive shoot” (v. 17) “grafted into a cultivated olive tree” (v. 24), though the metaphor means well. The resentment against the Jewish Christians is hinted at in Mark in the persistent polemic against the Jewish disciples, and might be triggered by the phrases that point to them, such as “having come from Jerusalem” (7:1).

The discourse of both passages is about eating. If Mark indeed knew Galatians, the rhetorical setting of Gal 2:11–16 that was established as a disturbed table fellowship in v. 12 is reenacted in Mark 7:1–2. The most notable among the few lexical and semantic links to Mark 7:1–2 which are found in Gal 2:12 is the act of eating. Paul uses the verb ἐσθίω with the prefix σύν, indicating that the issue was about whom to eat with, which in turn would determine what to be put on the table to eat. This issue of eating with the gentiles would not have been raised this sharply unless there had been a mission to the gentiles. This problem would not have existed within the homogeneous group of the Jerusalem Church and happened only as the gospel was preached to the gentiles. Thus, the issue at hand at Gal 2:11–16 is the matter of the food regulations in this particular context of the mission to the gentiles.

Mark 7:1–23 on the surface does not seem to be related to the gentile mission. However, the location of the passage within the Gospel as the transitioning point of Jesus’s ministry associates the pericope with the gentile mission. The geographical

---

<sup>59</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 43.

location in which the discourse takes place is Gennesaret (6:53), which functions as the station from which Jesus goes into the regions of Tyre (7:24), an undisputed gentile territory, where he ministers to the Syrophoenician woman (v. 26). Mark 7:1–23 functions as the point of transition from Jesus’s mission to the Jews to his mission to the gentiles. Jesus was previously said to have ministered to the gentiles who came to him from the gentile regions (3:7) and also to have cured the demon-possessed man in a village of Gerasa (5:30), foreshadowing the upcoming full-blown gentile ministry that takes place in 7:24–8:10. However, the transitional role of 7:1–23 becomes clear due to the conspicuous pair of feeding stories that are chiastically placed with Mark 7:1–23 in the middle as the chiastic center, as the first feeding (6:30–44) takes place before Jesus crosses over to Gennesaret while the second feeding takes place in the middle of the gentile Decapolis (7:31; 8:1).

The issue of how to eat, raised by the Pharisees in Mark 7:1–2, is responded to by Jesus with an answer regarding what to eat (v. 15). The issue of how to eat was employed through the characters of the Pharisees in order to bring up the issue of what to eat, the only issue to be clarified by Jesus. When it was difficult to reenact a gentile table setting with the Jewish characters of Jesus and his disciples, using the unfamiliar custom of the Pharisees might be Mark’s best shot at bringing up the elephant in the room without ruining the reality of the scene needed for persuasion. The awkwardness of the introductory issue of washing hands still exists, since the adjective *κοινός* in 7:2 had to be explained to mean “unwashed”, indicating that the word was not used in that sense among the Markan audience. Paul uses the same word without explanation to the Roman Christians to characterize the food (Rom 14:14). Later Luke uses *κοινός* and *ἀκαθάπτος*

side by side, clarifying the meaning of κοινός (Acts 10:14, 28; 1:8), since it could mean “shared” (Acts 2:44). Mark by using κοινός makes the transition of the subject from how to eat to what to eat less unexpected. In the case of Gal 2:11–16, the issue of whom to eat with is identified as the issue of what to eat in v. 14, where Paul is said to have asked Peter why he was compelling the gentiles to judaize (“ἰουδαΐζειν”). The issue of circumcision was not on the table, since the conflict in Antioch seems certain to have happened after the Jerusalem Council (Gal 2:1–10), where it was decided that the gentile converts should not be required to be circumcised (cf. Acts 15:2–29). Therefore, the issue at hand in Gal 2:11–16 must be of the food regulations.

In the Markan passage, the logion of Jesus is announced in 7:15 as the most important *logos* of the Markan rhetoric, then is explained (vv. 17–23) with the Markan enthymemes (v. 19 and v. 21) in the midst of which Mark gives the final verdict regarding the food issue, “καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα” (“purifying all the food,” v. 19). This kind of clear verdict on the food issue is not in Gal 2:11–16, but is embedded in v. 16, where Paul nullifies the works of law, which must include the food laws, as the means of justification, averring that a person is justified by faith in Christ. While the saying of Jesus functions as the central *logos* of the Markan passage, the formula of Pauline soteriology is presented as the sole theological basis to justify the act of eating the common (κοινός) food.

Now that it has been demonstrated that both passages present the similar or identical factors of rhetoric (speaker, audience, and discourse), along with the similar or identical modes of persuasion (*ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*), let us turn to the species of rhetoric (judicial, deliberative, and epideictic). Hans Dieter Betz sees Galatians as an

“apologetic letter,” thus a judicial rhetoric, which “presupposes the real or fictitious situation of the court of law, with jury, accuser, and defendant.”<sup>60</sup> In the judicial setting of the letter, “the addressees are identical with the jury, with Paul being the defendant, and his opponents the accusers.”<sup>61</sup> In Gal 2:11–16 also, the judicial setting is clear despite the invective element of epideictic rhetoric. The invective in the passage retains double targets: the Jewish disciples who do not belong to the circumcision party, and the circumcision party. On the surface, the invective is directed against Cephas (v. 11), who belongs to the first group, but the readers will quickly notice that the target is actually “certain men” who “came from James” (v. 12), quickly identified as “the circumcision party” (v. 12), Paul’s main opponents in the letter as hinted in the opening statement of 1:6–9 and the postscript of 6:11–18. However, these two groups are ultimately identified with each other and become one big target of the invective, by Paul’s report that all the Jews, “even Barnabas” joined the hypocrisy of the circumcision party (v. 13). Though it was Peter that was rebuked by Paul in v. 14, the rebuke is reported to have been uttered before all the Jews around Peter (v. 14), and must have been specifically directed against the circumcision party among them. In this sense Peter functions as a fake target that allows Paul to generate a hidden polemic against the circumcision party, though not so much hidden. The criticism of the hypocrisy of the Jews in Antioch was Paul’s way of inducing the tentative verdict on the issue on the table. In other words, the epideictic feature of invective helps the judicial rhetoric of Gal 2:11–16 achieve its rhetorical goal

---

<sup>60</sup> Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul’s Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 24.

<sup>61</sup> Betz, *Galatians*, 24.

of persuading the jury of the upcoming verdict more effectively. The judicial feature is most prominent in that Paul quotes the accusers' counterargument in v. 15 against Paul's rebuke in v. 14, "We ourselves are Jews by birth and not gentile sinners" (v. 15), only to counter it with the verdict, "we also have believed in Jesus Christ, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law," encased by the pair of enthymemes, "that (ὅτι) a person is not justified by works of law, if not through faith in Christ Jesus" (v. 16a) and "because (ὅτι) by works of the law no one will be justified" (v. 16).

Paul often quotes his opponents, without notifying that he will, and then would refute the argument that he just quoted. According to Adrian Graffy, Hermann Gunkel finds this technique of "quoting the opponents' words and refuting them" in the genre of disputation which has its origin "within prophecy as a result of differences of opinion between the prophet and his contemporaries."<sup>62</sup> For example, in Amos 7:16, the former shepherd reproduces in a more succinct form what Amaziah the priest of Bethel said previously in v. 12, with a simple introductory clause "you say" (v. 16), only to refute the quoted statement. In Paul's case, the supposed lack of punctuation or clauses that introduce the quotes in his letters caused a lot of misunderstanding. According to MacGregor, this "Quotation-Refutation Device" appears several times in 1 Cor (6:12–13; 7:1–2; 8:1, 8; 10:23), "in which Paul quotes a position from the Corinthians' letter with which he disagrees and then refutes it."<sup>63</sup> While these cases present various indicators for

---

<sup>62</sup> Adrian Graffy, *A Prophet Confronts His People: The Disputation Speech in the Prophets* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1984), 2.

<sup>63</sup> Kirk R. MacGregor, "1 Corinthians 14:33b-38 as a Pauline Quotation-Refutation Device," *Priscilla Pap.* 32.1 (2018): 25.

quoting, in the case of Gal 2:15–16 the sudden introduction of the first person plural pronoun in v. 15 indicates that the entire verse is a quotation, and the first enthymeme followed by “ὁ” (v. 16), this time functioning as adversative particle, indicates that v. 16 is a refutation to v. 15.

Similarly to Gal 2:11–16, Mark 7:1–23 uses the epideictic feature of invective in order to make the upcoming judicial verdict on the food issue more persuasive, though closing with a deliberative comment on a series of vices that defile a person. Though featuring the characters of all three species, it should still be considered a judicial rhetoric, since its ultimate rhetorical goal is to draw a verdict on the food issue. Mark uses vv. 3–4 to explain the Jewish custom of washing hands before eating and washing the cups, vessels, and kettles. The superfluosity of the explanation makes one wonder why. It might function as a preliminary invective that retains an epideictic feature by demonstrating how pettifogging the Pharisees and “all the Jews” (v. 3) are.

David M. Young and Michael Strickland present a thorough rhetorical analysis of Mark 6:53–7:23, characterizing Jesus’s discourse in it as judicial.<sup>64</sup> They include 6:53–56 as part of the rhetorical unit because “no narrative break occurs” between 6:53–56 and 7:1–23, suggesting that “the entire unit from 6:53 to 7:5 as the narrative introduction to the discourse.”<sup>65</sup> I do not disagree with this demarcation, as indicated in my argument that Mark 7:1–23 also deals with the issue of gentile mission since it is happening in

---

<sup>64</sup> David M. Young and Michael Strickland, *The Rhetoric of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2017), 193.

<sup>65</sup> Young and Strickland, *Rhetoric of Jesus*, 188.

Gennesaret. It is still possible, however, to separate 6:53–7:5 into 6:53–56 and 7:1–5, since the former has the distinct event of healing while the latter sets up for a halakic dispute. With this larger demarcation, Young and Strickland explain that just as Mark 3:20–35 has “a forensic situation” with the scribes who “charged that Jesus was working by the power of Beelzebul,” “[t]he rhetorical situation of 6:53–7:23 derives from an implicit charge issued against Jesus (vis-à-vis the disciples) over the matter of ceremonial purity”<sup>66</sup>; thus, “another ‘forensic’ situation arises in the Gospel with the Pharisees implying that Jesus and the disciples have broken the law.”<sup>67</sup> Young and Strickland suggest the Pharisees and scribes as “the prosecutors,” the crowd or “the readers of the Gospel” as “the jurors,” and Jesus as “the defendant, making use of rational argument as his primary defense, denying the authority of the traditions of the elders, and denying that the disciples’ act was ‘unclean.’”<sup>68</sup> Jesus, though functioning as the defendant, with the kind of authority that comes with his character also is the judge. Young and Strickland say that Jesus’s “authority to rightly interpret ritual cleanness and uncleanness cannot reasonably be questioned by either the crowds in the narrative world or by the readers of the Gospel”<sup>69</sup> due to this established *ethos* through the series of the preliminary affirmations on his divine status. As the prosecutors, the Pharisees and the scribes accuse

---

<sup>66</sup> Young and Strickland, *Rhetoric of Jesus*, 191.

<sup>67</sup> Young and Strickland, *Rhetoric of Jesus*, 192.

<sup>68</sup> Young and Strickland, *Rhetoric of Jesus*, 193.

<sup>69</sup> Young and Strickland, *Rhetoric of Jesus*, 194.

the disciples of Jesus, before Jesus, the divine judge at least to the audience, of not walking rightly according to the traditions of the elders, thus formally initiating a trial.

Upon hearing the accusation, Jesus accuses the accusers right back of their hypocrisy in vv. 6–13. Jesus quotes Isaiah 29:13 to criticize the Pharisees of teaching the traditions of men instead of God’s law, and also exemplifies how they would use the dedication word “*corban*” (v. 11; cf. *A.J.* 4.73) as a way of neglecting to give to their parents as a striking case of their hypocrisy. While contrasting God’s law and the tradition of men, Jesus rebukes the Pharisees and the scribes that they nullified God’s law to hold onto the traditions of the elders. As a typical epideictic rhetoric, vv. 6–13 plays the role of an *enthymeme* providing more reasons to trust the upcoming verdict. With this epideictic rhetoric Mark is underlining the utter lack of credibility of the teachings of all the Jews (since all the Jews do the same as the Pharisees according to v.3–4). Since a major portion of the pericope is spent on an invective against the Pharisees, one might deem the whole pericope to be epideictic. However, all the invectives were preliminarily employed to prepare the audience to be able to receive the final verdict as true. After taking away all the credibility of the Pharisees by exposing their hypocrisy, Jesus suddenly turns to the crowd and announces his logion (vv. 14–15). This sudden switch of the audience is called “apostrophe”<sup>70</sup> and is a common rhetorical feature, especially in a judicial setting, where the speaker turns from the nominal audience (the judge) to the crowd. Quintilian characterizes apostrophe as “wonderfully stirring” (Quintilian, *Inst.*

---

<sup>70</sup> Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 41.



9.2.38),<sup>71</sup> underlining the effect that the rhetorical device has in terms of addressing the new audience. By switching from addressing the Pharisees to addressing the crowd, the crowd gains the significant status as the jurors while the Pharisees and the scribes lose their significance as the prosecutors. The prosecution has been declined and the verdict is given not to the prosecutors but to the jury, the crowd. This *apostrophe* is also Mark's way of certifying the logion's authenticity, that the logion was known to many, even though the sayings tradition that the Jewish disciples had might not retain the logion.

Then, how is it that the Jewish disciples acted as if they did not know the logion in Gal 2:11–16? Jesus again turns from the crowd to the disciples in an indoor setting. In Mark 7:17–23, Jesus goes into the house and explains the meaning of the logion, only after underlining that the disciples are without understanding. By this Mark argues that Jesus did not fail to inform the meaning of the logion to the disciples, and it was the fault on the disciples' part that the Jewish disciples still held onto the food law. As the transition of the subject from the issue of handwashing to the matter of the food law happens, the invective that was directed toward the Pharisees is redirected against the disciples who did hear the purity logion but still did not understand. They would merely follow the hypocrisy that some of the Jewish Christians demonstrated at the setting of the table fellowship with the gentile Christians, as shown in Gal 2:11–16.

Though Mark 7:1–23 contains the characteristics of all three species of rhetoric, it is still a judicial rhetoric, the verdict of which gives a deliberative message regarding the

---

<sup>71</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria: Books I-III*, trans. H. E. Butler, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920), 397.

future conduct of the gentile disciples regarding food. The epideictic feature appears dominant, but condemning the supposed opponents itself is not the ultimate purpose but a way of justifying the upcoming verdict. In this judicial rhetoric, the final verdict of 19c would have had a direct impact on the Markan audience's reality, just as the verdict of Gal 2:16 would have on the Pauline recipients'. After this comparative-rhetorical analysis of Gal 2:11–16 and Mark 7:1–23, it should not sound far-fetched to suggest that the two passages share the same opponents: not the Pharisees, but the Pharisee-like Jewish disciples from Jerusalem.

Identifying the modes and the species of a given rhetoric, however, does not necessarily point to a hidden polemic, although it helps to identify the rhetorical goal of the passage. Looking more deeply into the arrangement of material in order to identify the “*devices of style*”<sup>72</sup> employed in the passage might help identify a hidden polemic. If we were to find ancient rhetorical theories which would parallel the modern theories of Amit's hidden polemic and Scott's hidden transcript, the devices of style would be the place to look for them. As the third part of “the five parts of rhetoric” (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery), style, “which involves both choice of words and the composition of words into sentences, including the use of figures,” holds the key to finding the hidden polemic.<sup>73</sup>

Justin R. Howell in his recent dissertation points to the ancient rhetorical method of “figured speech” and suggests that Luke “applied figured speech in his depictions of

---

<sup>72</sup> Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 37.

<sup>73</sup> Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 13.

the Pharisees.”<sup>74</sup> After introducing the broad definition of “figured speech” by Quintilian as ‘a form of speaking that is invented by some artistic means’ (*Inst.* 9.1.14 [Howell]), Howell demonstrates that there are various forms of figured speech, such as allusion, discretion, irony, indirect speech, hyperbole, consequence, comparison, allegory, and analogy, by referring to a few relevant passages by ancient rhetoricians.<sup>75</sup>

Demetrius discusses styles in *De elocutione*. Doreen C. Innes suggests this work as “the earliest post-Aristotelian treatise on literary theory to survive complete,”<sup>76</sup> suggesting its date of composition no later than the early first century BCE.<sup>77</sup> Demetrius suggests the four styles of rhetoric: grand, forceful, elegant, and plain.<sup>78</sup> According to Innes, Demetrius “almost admits” that he “derives his four styles” from “the theory of two styles, grand and plain,” which had existed as early as the fifth century BCE, “by subdividing grand into grand and forceful, and plain into plain and elegant.”<sup>79</sup>

After discussing the grand style, the elegant style, and the plain style, Demetrius begins his lecture on the forceful style (*Eloc.* 240), in which he first introduces various

---

<sup>74</sup> Justin R. Howell, “The Pharisees and Figured Speech in Luke-Acts” (PhD diss., The University of Chicago, 2016), 393.

<sup>75</sup> Howell, “Pharisees and Figured Speech,” 9–29. Among the passages that Howell refers to are *Eloc.* 287–95; *Inst.* 9.1–2; *Ars Rhet.* 8–9; *Inv.* 4.13; and *Rhet. Her.* 4.67.

<sup>76</sup> Aristotle, Longinus, and Demetrius, *Aristotle: Poetics.; Longinus: On the Sublime; Demetrius: On Style*, Revised., Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 311.

<sup>77</sup> Aristotle, Longinus, and Demetrius, *On Style*, 312–21.

<sup>78</sup> Aristotle, Longinus, and Demetrius, *On Style*, 324–32.

<sup>79</sup> Aristotle, Longinus, and Demetrius, *On Style*, 325.

methods of generating assertive effects. For example, Demetrius explains that brevity helps generate force, and so does a symbol because it causes the listeners to imagine more than what has been said (242–3); “harsh sounds” (246) or “cacophony” (255) might add force, and so does “a sudden lapse into silence” (253); “mixing in an element of playfulness” generate vigor (259). “The elaborate parallelism,” however, “seems too artificial” (250), thus one should “avoid antithesis and assonance” when in need of adding force, “since they add weight, not force, and the result is often frigid instead of forceful (247).”

Within the category of the forceful style, Demetrius introduces figures of thought, such as *paraleipsis* (mentioning something, saying that is not to be mentioned), *aposiopesis* (suddenly breaking off in speech), and *prosopoeia* (personification of an abstract subject) (263–6). Then there are figures of speech, such as simple repetition, *anaphora* (repeating the beginning part of successive clauses), *asyndeton* (speaking without connectives), *homoeoteleuton* (repeating the ending part in successive clauses), climax (267–270), all of which “provide the speaker with scope for dramatic delivery and immediacy [that is to say force]” (271).

Next is “the diction to use” in the forceful style for the purpose of creating force, such as metaphor, simile, compound words, words that match the subject, raising the tone, *epimone* (“elaboration going beyond the bare statement of fact,” 280), and euphemism (272–281). After this, Demetrius writes of the force resulting “from innuendo, from the use of an allegorical element, and thirdly from hyperbole” (282). He suggests a sentence by Demades (ca. 380–ca. 318 BCE) as an example, which is, ‘Alexander is not dead, men of Athens; or the whole world would have smelled his corpse’ (*fr.* 53 [de

Falco]). Demetrius explains that the use of ‘smelled’ instead of ‘noticed’ “is both allegory and hyperbole” and “the idea of the whole world noticing implicitly suggests Alexander’s power” (283).

Finally, Demetrius introduces “what is called allusive verbal innuendo” (Τὸ δὲ καλούμενον ἐσχημασμένον ἐν λόγῳ, 287). If innuendo in the previous case of the combined use of innuendo, allegory, and hyperbole corresponds to Amit’s category of the implit polemic, this “allusive verbal innuendo” corresponds to the hidden polemic. Demetrius criticizes some orators who used allusive verbal innuendo “in a ridiculous way, with a vulgar and what one might call obtrusive explicitness,” and suggests that “genuine allusive innuendo is expressed” with two important methods: “tact” (εὐπρέπεια) and “circumspection” (ἀσφάλεια) (287). Tact is illustrated in the example of Plato’s *Phaed.* 59c, in which Aristippus and Cleombrotus are implicitly rebuked for they did not visit Socrates when he was imprisoned. Plato has Phaedo present a long list of people’s name quite plainly, as an answer to Echecrates’s question as to who were with Socrates when he was imprisoned, only to answer another question as to where Aristippus and Cleombrotus were, saying, “they were said to be in Aegina” (59b–c). Demetrius explains that the invective against these two “seems far more forceful because the force is produced by the fact itself and not by an authorial comment” (288). Although there was no threat of retribution, tact was employed for the sake of effectiveness.

Demetrius relates “circumspection” to the unsafe rhetorical situation that a speaker faces, explaining that “in addressing a tyrant or any other violent individual, if we wish to be censorious, we often need to be oblique out of necessity [...]” (*Eloc.* 289

[Innes, LCL]).<sup>80</sup> That is, “allusive verbal innuendo” is often employed because the rhetorical situation makes it necessary. The purpose of using innuendo is to polemicize the powerful target implicitly without letting the target feel insulted or become aware of the fact that the polemic is directed against the target. For the purpose of disguise, innuendo can even take the form of praise while it is actually a mockery (291–2). Innuendo is employed because “flattery is shameful, open criticism is dangerous, and the best course lies in the middle” (294).

It seems that among the four styles of Demetrius, the forceful style seems to be used in Mark 7:1-23. Though identified essentially as a judicial rhetoric, Mark 7:1-23 features a clear invective against the Pharisees, thus is supposed to have “force” (δεινότης). Some of the devices that would generate force are found in the passage. A most obvious device which Mark uses to generate force would be hyperbole, as seen in v. 3 in which “all the Jews” are criticized along with the Pharisees. Also, repetition and avoidance of elaborate parallelism are notable in repeating the purity logion (v. 15) in v. 18b and v. 20 in their broken form. It could even be proposed that *prosopoeia* is at work, if Mark wanted to express how hypocrisy takes its form in real life. However, setting these trivial stylistic features aside, the most significant device that Mark seems to use is *innuendo*, by which he disguises the real target of polemic, the Jewish-Christian community in Jerusalem, with the character of the Pharisees. The assessment of this figured speech, however, can only be done when one is aware of the rhetorical situation that Mark faced. While identifying

---

<sup>80</sup> This ancient awareness of the need of censoring oneself in expressing one’s polemic in certain situations resonates with the modern theory of the hidden transcript by James C. Scott. See Scott, *Domination and Arts of Resistance*.

the species of rhetoric is done by looking at *logos* of a text, instances of figured speech within the text cannot be grasped without understanding the context, which includes the speaker's *ethos*, the speaker's relationship with the opponent(s), the audience's relationship with the opponent(s), and the possible *pathos* that can be aroused due to these relationships. As previously maintained, Mark's audience as a gentile-Christian community, with their unequal relationship with the Jewish-Christian community in Jerusalem, presented Mark with the need to use allusive verbal innuendo.

#### 5.7. Who were these "Pharisees?"

I suggest that the characteristics of the Jewish-Christian group that Mark criticizes coincide with the characteristics of a primary group within the early church in Jerusalem, which were inherited by the Ebionites. Mark's polemical points against this Jewish group might reveal these characteristics. Peter and other Jewish disciples, as supposed representative of the early church in Jerusalem, are criticized by Mark as a way of polemicizing against this group, thus suggesting that this group also held Peter and other Jewish disciples as their representatives. Mark suggests a higher Christology against the low Christology that this group maintained. This group's representative is reported to have confessed Jesus as Christ, which is not complete from Mark's perspective, since Jesus is both Christ and God's Son from the beginning of his Gospel. This group observed the Jewish laws and expected others to do the same, as the passages that involve Pharisees indicate. This group also might have claimed kinship to Jesus, since Mark

deliberately dismisses any natural kinship as a basis for affinity to Jesus (3:31–35), not to mention regionalism (6:1–6).

To find a group that demonstrates a matching set of characteristics, the various groups in early Christianity need to be considered. Raymond E. Brown, while rejecting the simple dissect between Jewish Christianity and gentile Christianity, suggests four groups that constituted the early Christian communities that New Testament demonstrates: “Group One, consisting of Jewish Christians and their gentile converts, who insisted on *full observance of the Mosaic Law*, including circumcision, for those who believed in Jesus”<sup>81</sup>; “Group Two, consisting of Jewish Christians and their gentile converts, who did *not* insist on circumcision but did require converted gentiles to keep *some Jewish observances*”<sup>82</sup>; “Group Three, consisting of Jewish Christians and their gentile converts, who did not insist on circumcision and did *not* require observance of the Jewish (‘kosher’) food laws”<sup>83</sup>; and “Group Four, consisting of Jewish Christians and their gentile converts, who did not insist on circumcision or observance of the Jewish food laws and who *saw no abiding significance in Jewish cult and feasts.*”<sup>84</sup>

Paul seems to refer to the first group as “false believers” (Gal 2:4) and “mulilators” (Phil 3:2), demonstrating that there existed a clear enmity between Paul and them, while the second group is associated with the “esteemed” apostles in Jerusalem (v.

---

<sup>81</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 2.

<sup>82</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 3.

<sup>83</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 4.

<sup>84</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 6.



9), as they are reported to have approved of Paul's mission to the uncircumcised (vv. 6–10), not demanding circumcision from them. The third group includes Paul and those who shared Paul's views after 50 CE. Paul clearly distinguished himself from the first group in that he opposed them and from the second group in that he did *not* "require Christians to abstain from food dedicated to idols (1 Cor 8)," unlike James who seems to have required the gentiles to "abstain only from things polluted by idols" and "from whatever has been strangled and from blood" (Acts 15:20, 29 NIV).<sup>85</sup> Brown explains the fourth group as consisting of the Jewish Christians "who had been raised with heavy Greek acculturation, perhaps often to the point of being able to speak only Greek, not a Semitic language."<sup>86</sup> These rather fully hellenized Jewish-Christians "would see Jesus as replacing the Jewish high priesthood and sacrifices, and would place the Christian altar in heaven," as the Epistle to Hebrew indicates (8:1–6), thus discarding the significance of Jerusalem as the only place of worship (cf. John 4:21) and the religious rules and rituals commanded by the Jewish Scripture.<sup>87</sup> Paul cannot be categorized in this group, which would not "think of gentiles as a wild olive branch grafted on the tree of Israel, as does Paul in Rom 11:24."<sup>88</sup>

While it is clear that the group that Mark criticizes in 7:1–23 would not belong to the third or fourth group, it is not easy to judge which of the two other groups Mark's

---

<sup>85</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 4.

<sup>86</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 6.

<sup>87</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 7.

<sup>88</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 7.

polemical target belongs to. My simplest answer would be that Mark criticizes the second group for having become like the first group. The second group as “a moderately conservative Jewish/gentile Christianity”<sup>89</sup> is represented by the leadership of the early church in Jerusalem which includes James the brother of Jesus and other apostles.<sup>90</sup> Since this group acknowledged Paul’s mission to the gentiles, they initially did not have much reason to cause a conflict with a gentile-Christian group. However, problems arose when “certain ones from James” came to Antioch (Gal 2:12). Did these belong to the first group? Then, why does Paul associate them with James? Brown suggests that ‘men of James’ who “came to Antioch with demands about certain law observances (Gal 2:11–12)” are distinguished from Group One because the question that they seem to have raised was not about circumcision but about the food laws.<sup>91</sup> The problem with this reconstruction is that Paul still refers to them as “the ones of circumcision” (Gal 2:12), though it might simply mean that they were Jews. Luke seems to have understood Paul’s “τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς” (Gal 2:12) to mean the circumcision party and wrote that this group taught the believers in Antioch that they could not be saved unless they were circumcised (Acts 15:1). Luke further associates this group with “certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees” among the believers in Jerusalem (15:5). If this Lukan account were to be taken at face value, one might associate these Pharisees with the ones from James (Gal 2:12), and in turn with the ones that Mark disguises as Pharisees in 7:1–13. Then, Mark’s

---

<sup>89</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 3.

<sup>90</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 4.

<sup>91</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 4.

use of the character of Pharisees might be a rather blunt indicator of whom he actually refers to.

Luke, however, obviously romanticized the Pauline account of the conflict among Paul, Peter, Barnabas, and James, so as to suggest that there was no conflict whatsoever among the esteemed figures of the early church regarding the issues of gentile mission. In the course of romanticizing the relationship between James and Paul, Luke makes a clear distinction between “certain” ones from Judea (Acts 15:1) and James, while Paul seems to hold James responsible for letting those “certain” ones loose and come to Antioch. Luke’s associating the ones from Judea with the Pharisees within the Jerusalem Church might have been caused by Paul’s polemical language of Peter *playing a Pharisee* by *separating himself* from the gentiles (Gal 2:12). Despite Luke’s tendency of romanticizing the relations among the apostles, Luke’s report that there actually was a group of Pharisees that joined the early church (Acts 15:5) is still congruent with Paul’s confession that he had been a Pharisee (Phil 3:5; cf. Acts 23:6; 26:5).

I agree with Brown that ‘men of James’ belonged to the second group.<sup>92</sup> Paul calls them “τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς” in a derogatory manner (Gal 2:12) due to the problems that they caused with their legalistic behavior regarding the table fellowship with the gentiles, and not because they were associated with the group that Paul would call “false believers” (Gal 2:4) or “mutilators” (Phil 3:2). However, as Paul’s polemical language of *separation* indicates, they were acting as hypocritically as the first group which was similar to the Pharisees in behavior, or, according to Luke, might even have been Pharisees. Still, any

---

<sup>92</sup> Brown and Meier, *Antioch and Rome*, 4.

group that belonged to the early Jerusalem church by the time of Mark's writing should be distinguished from the sect of Pharisees, since there was a clear animosity between the early Jerusalem community that produced Q and the Pharisees, as reflected in the series of woe sayings in Q (11:42; 39b–40; 43; 44; 46; 47; 52). The second group that distinguished itself from the first group by initially acknowledging Paul's mission to the gentiles became "hypocritical" (Gal 2:13; cf. Mark 7:6) as the first group or even as the Pharisees, and thus is criticized by Paul, and later by Mark.

I also suggest the Ebionites as having inherited the characteristics that Mark criticizes, thus revealing more about Mark's polemical points and target. According to Kaufmann Kohler, the Ebionites were a sect of Jewish-Christians "of the second to the fourth century."<sup>93</sup> Most heresiological accounts by the Church Fathers use the term only to mean the heretical Jewish-Christian sect. The first clear reference to the Ebionites is by Irenaeus (ca. 130–ca. 202 CE), who characterizes them as follows:

Those who are called Ebionites agree that the world was made by God; but their opinions with respect to the Lord are similar to those of Cerinthus and Carpocrates. They use the Gospel according to Matthew only, and repudiate the Apostle Paul, maintaining that he was an apostate from the law. As to the prophetic writings, they endeavour to expound them in a somewhat singular manner: they practice circumcision, persevere in the observance of those customs which are enjoined by the law, and are so Judaic in their style of life, that they

---

<sup>93</sup> Kaufmann Kohler, "EBIONITES," *The Jewish Encyclopedia*.

even adore Jerusalem as if it were the house of God. (*Adv. haer.* 1.26.2 [Roberts])<sup>94</sup>

Petri Luomanen doubts that Irenaeus drew on Justin Martyr regarding the Ebionites, since Justin “did not regard Ebionite views as clearly heretical,”<sup>95</sup> based on his reading of *Dial.* 46–48, where Justin indicates that a person who still observes the Torah after believing Jesus as Christ, if not striving to persuade other people to keep the Torah, will still be saved (*Dial.* 47). Thus it seems that Irenaeus wrote about the Ebionites “on his own” or “received his information from another source.”<sup>96</sup> As the earliest source that we can trace, Irenaeus’s account regarding the Ebionites became the primary source for later authors such as Hippolytus (170–235 CE), who “follows Irenaeus almost word for word,” and Tertullian (ca. 155–ca. 240 CE) and Pseudo-Tertullian, who “also drew on the same tradition.”<sup>97</sup> However, Tertullian came up with a figure named Ebion as the one who taught the Ebionite doctrine (*De praescr. haer.* 33.3–5; 11), and Pseudo-Tertullian also mentions Ebion as Cerinthus’s successor (*Adv. omn. haer.* 3.3). Regarding this interesting phenomenon of creating a founder of a group to explain the origin of the group, Petri Luomanen mentions, “The invention of the person Ebion is often explained by referring to the fact that since many of the ‘heresies’ were founded by individuals, it was natural to

---

<sup>94</sup> Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds., *Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325. Volume 1: The Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus* (New York: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885).

<sup>95</sup> Petri Luomanen, *Recovering Jewish-Christian Sects and Gospels* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 18.

<sup>96</sup> Luomanen, *Recovering Jewish-Christian Sects*, 18.

<sup>97</sup> Luomanen, *Recovering Jewish-Christian Sects*, 24.

think that the Ebionites were also followers of a certain Ebion.”<sup>98</sup> Setting aside the attempt to understand the Ebionites as a sect founded by a certain figure, it seems that the name “Ebionites” originally had been used to refer to the earliest Jewish-Christian community in Jerusalem and was held onto by a subgroup of the Jerusalem church. This broader application of the name was first suggested by Origen (ca. 184–ca. 253), who brought up the semantics of “Ebion” as ‘*poor*’ and that “Ebionites” was the term by which the Jewish Christians were called, due to their “poor” literal understanding of the Jewish Scripture (*Cels.* 2.1).<sup>99</sup> If Origen’s suggestion to apply the name Ebionites to the early Jewish Christian community is valid, Paul’s references to the poor in Gal 2:10 and Rom 15:26 might reflect how the early Jewish Christians in Jerusalem were referred to.

Luomanen assumes a reasonable connection between the Ebionites and “the earliest Jerusalem community,” with these four facts. First, Luomanen thinks that “the title Ebionites, the ‘poor,’ “matches the title of the earliest Jerusalem community (or at least its subgroup),” as found in Paul’s references to the poor in Rom 15:26 and Gal 2:10; second, just as the Ebionites demonstrate anti-Paulinism, the early church seems to have had groups that opposed Paul in regard to the gentile mission; third, these same groups “emphasize the observance of the law and need to circumcise the gentile Christian as well”; fourth, the centrality of Jerusalem and its Temple, which involves the “end-time

---

<sup>98</sup> Petri Luomanen et al., *Explaining Christian Origins and Early Judaism: Contribution from Cognitive and Social Judaism* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2007), 221.

<sup>99</sup> Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxes, eds., *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, trans. Frederick Crombie, vol. 4 (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885).

expectations,” is shared by both, as the Ebionites prayed toward Jerusalem and the Jerusalem temple was important to the early church and its leader James.<sup>100</sup> Based on these common traits, Luomanen wants to argue that the Ebionites “as they are described by Irenaeus may very well have been an offshoot of the earliest Jerusalem community.”<sup>101</sup> Luomanen further suggests that the second and third facts about the Ebionites must have caused their separation from the “orthodox” church, saying, “The Ebionites’ anti-Paulinism, which probably also meant that they wanted the gentile believers to be circumcised and observe the law, must have resulted in the separation of the Ebionites from the formative Catholic Christianity, at least in the form that was developing in Rome and the Western parts of the Empire.”<sup>102</sup>

There exist certain links between Mark’s polemical points and the characteristics of the Ebionites. While Mark polemicizes against Peter, the Ebionites seem to have held Peter and James as their primary exemplars, considering Epiphanius’s (ca. 310–403 CE) report that the Ebionites used *Travels of Peter* (*Pan.* 30.15.1 [Williams]),<sup>103</sup> in which the character of Peter seems to have been reworked to have been “baptized daily for purification” (30.15.3), and *Ascents of James*, besides their version of Acts (30.16.1), which was “different from the canonical one.”<sup>104</sup> Though James the Just is not mentioned

---

<sup>100</sup> Luomanen, *Recovering Jewish-Christian Sects*, 23.

<sup>101</sup> Luomanen, *Recovering Jewish-Christian Sects*, 24.

<sup>102</sup> Luomanen, *Recovering Jewish-Christian Sects*, 22.

<sup>103</sup> Frank Williams, trans., *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis: Book I (Sects 1-46)*, 2nd ed., Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 143.

<sup>104</sup> Luomanen, *Recovering Jewish-Christian Sects*, 32.

as a target of direct polemic in Mark, he is still explicitly mentioned in name twice in 6:3 and 16:1, thus retrospectively implied in 3:31–34, the passage in which Jesus seems to dismiss his family's call in order to call those around him his family. According to Epiphanius's heresiological accounts, which follow those of Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Origen, and Eusebius, the Ebionites held a low Christology in which Christ is mere human (*Pan.* 30.2.2), the kind of Christology that Mark opposes by asserting that Jesus is God's Son, the concept which was absent in the first-century Palestinian Judaism. The most evident similarity would be found in that, just as Mark polemicizes against the legalism of Jesus's opponents (2:23–27; 3:1–5; 7:1–23), the Ebionites adhered to the Jewish laws, such as Sabbath and circumcision (30.2.2), not to mention the food laws since they seems to have taken them further so as to have become vegetarian (30.15.3).

Besides these parallels, there is another to be examined, which regards Mark's negative depiction of Jerusalem and the Ebionites' reverence for Jerusalem. In order to recognize Mark's negative depiction of Jerusalem, one must look at Mark's literary tendency of associating regions with his literary figures to create connotations for the names of the regions, which may have been shared by the target audience. The name of a place represents the character associated with the place, and vice versa. Jesus represents Galilee, and as the story proceeds, Galilee begins to represent Jesus. John the Baptist represents the Jordan River, as he did his ministry of baptism there, and eventually the Jordan River reminds of John the Baptist even after he is gone. The Pharisees and other sects related to the Temple cult represent Jerusalem, and Jerusalem with its impending destiny represents the groups centered around the Temple. Jerusalem was also the place of death for Jesus. The resurrected Jesus does not stay in Jerusalem even for a moment,



and goes to Galilee, where Jesus commands the disciples to go and wait for him. Through this plot, Mark seems to attempt to decentralize the religious hegemony centered around Jerusalem where the Jewish Christians had their headquarters.

The word Jerusalem appears in 1:5; 3:8; 22; 7:1; 10:32; 33; 11:1; 11; 15; 27; 15:41. The first attempt to associate a region with a character is found in 1:5, where it says, “καὶ ἐξεπορεύετο πρὸς αὐτὸν πᾶσα ἡ Ἰουδαία χώρα καὶ οἱ Ἱεροσολυμίται πάντες καὶ ἐβαπτίζοντο ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ Ἰορδάνῃ ποταμῷ ἐξομολογούμενοι τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν.” Mark describes the range of the influence that the ministry of John the Baptist had in his place of the Jordan River. “οἱ Ἱεροσολυμίται πάντες” is in parallel with “ἡ Ἰουδαία χώρα” to indicate that John’s ministry in the Jordan river was comprehensive of the Jewish people in the region. With this association of the Jordan River with John the Baptist, Mark compares the size of John’s ministry to that of Jesus by comparing the regions of ministry. Mark has in 3:8 “καὶ ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰδουμαίας καὶ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου καὶ περὶ Τύρον καὶ Σιδῶνα πλῆθος πολὺ ἀκούοντες ὅσα ἐποίει ἦλθον πρὸς αὐτόν.” Mark demonstrates that the ministerial hegemony has been switched from John to Jesus, that is, from the *Jordan River* to the *Sea* of Galilee. The size of the attention that Jesus received goes beyond what John had, just as a sea is grander than a river. πλῆθος is emphatically modified by πολὺ and functions as the subject. This huge crowd came not just from the land of Israel but from the gentile regions beyond Jordan. In 3:22 Mark begins to associate Jerusalem with the scribes and in 7:1 with the Pharisees. In 10:32–33, Jesus’s predicted death is associated with Jerusalem, and this negative connotation that Mark has created stays attached to the word Jerusalem for the rest of the story in that Jerusalem is the place where Jesus’s major conflicts with the religious

leaders happen so as to threaten his life. 15:41 is the last place where the word Jerusalem is mentioned, and in it Mark has Jesus's original followers who have come from Galilee to Jerusalem witness the death of Jesus from afar (ἀπὸ μακρόθεν, 15:40).

In contrast to Jerusalem, Galilee appears in 1:9; 14; 16; 28; 39; 3:7; 6:21; 7:31; 9:30; 14:28; 15:41; 16:7. Except for one case of 6:21, Galilee is associated with Jesus, his ministry, and his original followers. At the end in 16:7, the young man at the tomb tells the three women (Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome), who have visited the tomb, to go and tell Jesus's disciples and Peter that Jesus would go before them into Galilee to meet with them, just as Jesus predicted to them (14:28). However, Mark concludes his Gospel by saying that the message never was delivered to the disciples (16:8). Whether the women shared the message with other disciples or not, according to Mark, Jesus foretold the disciples that he would go to Galilee after the resurrection (14:28); therefore, the Jewish disciples who had come from Jerusalem in Gal 2:11–14 can be said to have neglected the *will* of Jesus because they stayed in Jerusalem. James the Just, as their leader, is reported by Eusebius to have stayed in Jerusalem and have died right before the siege of Vespasian (*Hist. eccl.* 2.23.18–19). Mark's depiction of Jerusalem as the place of Jesus's death and the series of warnings to leave Jerusalem before its impending destruction (13:2; 14:28; 16:7) seem to make a polemical point against the Jewish-Christian community which would adhere to Jerusalem despite the Siege of Yodfat (67 CE) or even after the destruction of Jerusalem (70 CE). Irenaeus's criticism against the Ebionites for adoring Jerusalem "as if it were the house of God"<sup>105</sup>

---

<sup>105</sup> Luomanen, *Recovering Jewish-Christian Sects*, 18.

(*Haer.* 1.26.2) even after the destruction of the Second Temple parallels this Markan polemic.

It is still hard to pinpoint the exact group as Mark's target of polemic. Nevertheless, depicting it as a Jewish-Christian subgroup of the early church in Jerusalem, the characteristics of which were inherited by the Ebionites, does not seem to be far off the mark.

## 5.8. Conclusion

Mark with the purity logion (7:15), which he seems to have inherited from a source that is not his Jewish-Christian source (Q), has composed a judicial rhetoric in the form of a narrative, in which Jesus as the judge with the ultimate authority utters the *logos* that consists of the purity logion (7:15) and its interpretation (vv. 17–23). The purity logion is spoken to the crowd (v. 14), which could include gentile people from Gennesaret if 6:53–56 provides the geographical setting for 7:1–23, while the interpretation is given only to the Jewish disciples, only after Jesus describes them as being “without understanding” (v. 18). The interpretation of the logion presents the author's judicial interpretation (“cleansing all foods,” v. 19c) as the final verdict on the whole matter of food. Since the structure of vv. 17–23 demonstrates chiasmic traits, the verdict in the middle holds the significance as the chiasmic center. Also, the verdict is trustworthy because it is based on an authentic saying of Jesus, though not found in Q perhaps because the Jewish disciples were “without understanding” (v. 18). It was still widely known, perhaps even to Paul (Rom 14:14), because Jesus spoke it to all in the

open (v. 14). While presenting the verdict, Mark ultimately blames the Jewish disciples for not having handed down what Jesus said about food, thus confusing the audience regarding the issue. Thus, as I have suggested in the introduction of this chapter, 7:1–23 can be categorized as a polemic against the Jewish disciples, the second of the two major polemics in Mark.

Nevertheless, the Pharisees and some scribes still have been employed to add the element of *mythos* to enhance the effectiveness of the rhetoric. First, they are used to set up the initial judicial setting, in which they take the role of prosecutors. Second, they are used to create *pathos* in the rhetoric, because the audience is deliberately led to *feel* a growing antipathy toward them in the process of their prosecution against the disciples, Mark's expose of their petty legalistic custom, and Jesus's invective against them in the words of Isaiah. Third, they are used to hide the real subject of the polemic. The audience of Mark has no reason to care about who the Pharisees are, since there was no meaningful contact between Mark's audience and the Second Temple Jewish sect called Pharisees. The audience, however, is deliberately led to care about the story when they are told that the Pharisees had come from Jerusalem, a geographical name which to a gentile-Christian audience had a metonymic significance for the Jewish-Christians from whom the gospel was supposed to have originated. As the rhetoric proceeds, some quick-witted listeners might realize that this rhetoric is not about washing hands nor about the Pharisees, because the scene reminds the audience of their firsthand experience with some fellow Jewish Christians from Jerusalem, who might have attempted to push their legalistic agenda, or of a secondhand experience of reading or hearing about the unpleasant encounter with such individuals from Jerusalem. However, if the hidden polemic is not

detected and the character of the Pharisees are merely understood to mean the historical Pharisees, that slow-witted ancient hearer might have become confused and might have asked, “Who were the Pharisees again?”, when others already had some catharsis.

A modern reader who does not have such experience (with a “pious” Jewish Christian from Jerusalem) is also unlikely to figure out the hidden polemic, just as present-day scholarship so far took the pericope pretty much at face value or did not know what to do with the problems of improbability. However, if modern readers had at least tried to put themselves in Mark’s gentile audience’s position and eventually got the hunch, with the help of various critical theories available, they might be in a good position to figure out the hidden polemic and even to make a meaningful conjecture regarding whom Mark actually points to with the character of the Pharisees.

## CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I have attempted to prove the thesis that Mark has employed the character of the Pharisees in 7:1–23 as a caricature to satirize the Jewish-Christian judaizers, who belonged to the Jerusalem Church. Due to the unequal relationship in which the Jerusalem Church was dominant over Mark's audience, the polemic against the judaizers from the Jerusalem Church had to be hidden in the character of the Pharisees. Still, since the polemic needed to be communicated to the target audience, Mark seems to have left subtle but significant signs to help his target audience to detect who is being really criticized.

The most fundamental assumption that I had about the Gospel of Mark is that it was written to win arguments. Just as the author of Colossians declares that the gospel had been preached in all creation (Col 1:23), preaching the gospel might not have been Mark's most urgent concern. Accurate historical reporting might not have concerned Mark much either, as is indicated by Mark's free redaction of his sources, such as Q. What Mark cared about more than preaching and recording is counterarguing, because Mark faced both the public transcript of the imperial propaganda of Vespasian and that of certain Jewish Christians in Jerusalem, which, if not subverted, would have affected his community negatively.

While the biggest obstacle in subverting the public transcript controlled by the imperial propaganda was the utter imbalance of physical (military and political) power between the Roman Empire and Mark's audience, the fundamental obstacle in subverting

the public transcript controlled by the Jewish-Christian community in Jerusalem was the imbalance of religious authority between the headquarters of Christianity and one of its colonial outposts.

This imbalance of power between the Jerusalem Church and Mark's gentile audience can be safely assumed based on the information that we have regarding both groups. On the one hand, the Jerusalem Church had the upper hand as the supposed origin of the gospel. First, they were represented by the apostles such as Peter and John (Gal 2:9), who were appointed by Jesus himself. They were believed to have inherited Jesus's teaching firsthand. The Jerusalem Church also had the claim of kinship to Jesus, with some individuals of Jesus's family as their key members. The Jerusalem Church also seems to have had a direct access to a set of Jesus's sayings that were selectively compiled and became Q, which as a written norm must have added to their authority and also delineated the basic shape of their religion. With these trifold claims of holding firsthand discipleship, kinship to Jesus, and a sacred text, the Jerusalem Church must have seen itself as the headquarters of Christianity and retained the right to dictate gentile believers what to believe and to do.

On the other hand, Mark's audience, who lived far away from Jerusalem but still received the gospel handed down from the Jerusalem Church (1 Cor 15:3), did not have claims to firsthand discipleship or kinship to Jesus, nor did they have their own sacred text. All that they could have done in a situation in which they had to deal with judaizers from the Jerusalem Church would have been to passively receive their legalistic instructions and to follow them whether they liked them or not, *had it not been for Mark*.

In order to understand what Mark was doing in dealing with judaizers from the Jerusalem Church, we should be reminded of Horsley's observation that a hidden transcript is not just developed between subordinates and those who dominate, but also "developed as the result of power relations among the subordinated themselves."<sup>1</sup> Both the Jerusalem and Mark's community were subordinates under the Roman Empire. Even though the Jerusalem Church should have remained an ally a gentile-Christian communities, they operated as a dominant group which imposed Jewish rules upon gentile believers (2:14). The public transcript shared between the Jerusalem Church and gentile communities was controlled by the Jerusalem Church, and it dictated that gentile communities should listen to whatever the headquarters of their new belief would instruct them. Mark did not want his audience to submit to this public transcript, thus developed a hidden transcript, which, when published, would subvert the public transcript shared by the Jerusalem Church and gentile-Christian communities, including his target audience in Rome.

Mark begins his Gospel by indicating that he will describe the beginning of the Gospel (1:1), which some of Mark's audience might have still considered to be the Jerusalem Church. Mark ends his Gospel abruptly by emphasizing that the three women at the empty tomb of Jesus spoke "nothing to anyone, because they were afraid" (16:8 NIV). Considering Mark's frequent use of chiasmus, this abrupt ending might just be Mark's final answer to the question embedded in the first line of the Gospel: What is the beginning of the Gospel? It cannot be the Twelve, who represent the Jerusalem Church,

---

<sup>1</sup> Horsley, "Introduction," 20.



because they were not informed of the gospel of Jesus's resurrection so early, since the women, who heard from the first witness that Jesus was risen and would go to Galilee (16:5–6), never told anybody anything (v. 8). Mark might even implicitly suggest that disciples in Galilee or near Galilee, who must have included gentiles (cf. Matt 4:15; Isa 9:1), might have had more chance to meet the risen Jesus (v. 7b) before the Twelve did, since Jesus had left Jerusalem immediately after he rose and went to Galilee.

Mark also disputes the Jerusalem Church's trifold claims of holding firsthand apostleship, kinship to Jesus, and the sayings tradition. The apostleship of the Twelve is critically undermined as Mark develops a polemic against them. The Twelve are compared to the Pharisees due to their hardened heart (6:52; 8:17) and contrasted with other exemplary disciple figures such as Bartimaeus (10:46–52) and the bleeding woman (5:25–34) in terms of having faith (4:40; 9:19), and ultimately are accused of having abandoned Jesus in the critical moment of his arrest (14:50) and of having failed to bury Jesus (15:42–47; cf. 6:29). The Jerusalem Church's claim of kinship to Jesus is also disputed by Jesus's declaration that "whoever does the will of God" is his family member (3:31–35). Lastly, the Jerusalem Church's claim of having the sayings tradition of Jesus is disputed by Mark's polemic that the Twelve were unable to understand Jesus's teachings (4:13; 7:18; 8:17), his power (4:41; 8:21), or the meaning of his passion and resurrection (8:31–33; 9:10, 32).

This way, the Jerusalem Church's claim to being the origin of the gospel has been compromised. This literary strategy of undermining the religious authority of the Jerusalem community is only effective on the premise that the gospel originated from the person of Jesus and not from the Jerusalem establishment which claims to represent him.

This premise has been confirmed from the beginning of the gospel in the formula “the gospel of Jesus Christ [Son of God]” (1:1). With this premise that Jesus himself is the origin of the gospel, Mark has Jesus minister directly to gentiles (6:53–56; 7:24–37; cf. 3:7–8). And with this claim that Jesus preached directly to gentiles, who received Jesus more readily than Jews, Mark’s audience is allowed to be independent from the Jerusalem Church’s influence over them.

Though persistent and pervasive, Mark’s polemics against the Jewish disciples are still implicit in the form of narrative and sometimes hidden by certain means. Just as Paul would not announce schism from the Jerusalem Church while still rebuking Peter (Gal 2:11–16), Mark would not renounce the affiliation that his community had with the Jerusalem Church. Therefore, Mark chose to employ the character of the Pharisees, when it came to criticizing Jewish-Christian judaizers in 7:1–23. While Mark’s audience was in Rome, the historical Pharisees were confined within Palestine, thus posing no real threat to Mark or his audience. Mark’s audience probably would not know or even care to know who the Pharisees were. Thus, Mark was able to barrage the Pharisees with his worst invectives without any need of self-censorship. Mark’s Jewish-Christian opponents would agree with Mark’s invectives against the Pharisees since they also had a negative view on the Pharisees (Q 11:39a, 42, 39b, 41, 43–44). The polemic against Mark’s Jewish-Christian opponents were well hidden! Nevertheless, just to make sure that whoever has ears might hear the point (cf. Mark 4:9), Mark left hints both in the context and within the text of 7:1–23. Mark has interwoven the polemic against the Pharisees with the polemic against the Jewish disciples seamlessly through the polemical language of heart featured chiastically from 3:1–10:12, which becomes the context of 7:1–23.

Mark also left some hints within the pericope itself, such as “from Jerusalem” (v. 1) and “hypocrites” (v. 6), which resonates with some expressions in Gal 2:11–16. Too much disguise would ruin the communication with the target audience, while too many hints would give the hidden polemic away to a censor. Therefore, Mark had to find a fine line between hiding the polemic and communicating the polemic. In 7:1–23, that fine line was the hypocritical character of the Pharisees who are said to have come from Jerusalem. If this hidden polemic of Mark escaped the notice of a gentile hearer, that unwitting ancient person would ask later: “Who were the Pharisees again?”

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aageson, James W., Craig A. Evans, Sylvia C. Keesmaat, and Michael P. Knowles. *Hearing the Old Testament in the New Testament*. Edited by Stanley E. Porter. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2006.
- Aland, Barbara, Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlo M. Martini, and Bruce M. Metzger, eds. *Novum Testamentum Graece*. 28th ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012.
- Amit, Yairah. *Hidden Polemics in Biblical Narrative*. Boston: Brill, 2000.
- Aristotle, Longinus, and Demetrius. *Aristotle: Poetics.; Longinus: On the Sublime; Demetrius: On Style*. Revised. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995.
- Aune, David E., Judith H. Newman, C. Thomas McCollough, Christophe Rico, Michael W. Holmes, Leslie Baynes, Amy-Jill Levine, Duane F. Watson, Jerome H. Neyrey, et al. *The Blackwell Companion to the New Testament (Blackwell Companions to Religion)*. Edited by David E. Aune. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
- Betz, Hans Dieter. *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*. Hermeneia. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979.
- Bock, Darrell, Edwin K. Broadhead, S. Anthony Cummins, James R. Edwards, Craig A. Evans, Thomas R. Hatina, Larry Perkins, Stanley E. Porter, Mark A. Proctor, et al. *The Gospel of Mark*. Edited by Thomas R. Hatina. Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels. London: T&T Clark International, 2006.
- Borg, Marcus J. *Conflict, Holiness, and Politics in the Teachings of Jesus*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1998.
- Boring, M. Eugene. *Mark: A Commentary*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.
- Brown, Raymond E., and John P. Meier. *Antioch and Rome: New Testament Cradles of Catholic Christianity*. Mahwah: Paulinist Press, 1983.
- Brunt, P. A., Dieter Georgi, S. R. F. Price, Paul Zanker, Peter Garnsey, Richard Saller, John K. Chow, Richard Gordon, Helmut Koester, et al. *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society*. Edited by Richard A. Horsley. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997.
- Burns, John Barclay. "Devotee or Deviate: The 'Dog' (Keleb) in Ancient Israel as a

- Symbol of Male Passivity and Perversion.” *J. RelSoc.* 2 (2000): 1–10.
- Carr, Edward Hallett. *What Is History?* Edited by R. W. Davies. 2nd ed. London: Penguin Books, 1987.
- Cohen, Shaye J. D. *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- Cook, Donald E. “A Gospel Portrait of the Pharisees.” *RevExp* 84.2 (1978): 221–33.
- Crossan, John Dominic. *The Historical Jesus.* San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2010.
- Damascus, Nicolaus of. *Life of Augustus.* Translated by Clayton M. Hall, 1923.  
<https://www.csun.edu/~hcfl1004/nicolaus.html>.
- DeConick, April D. *The Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation: With a Commentary and New English Translation of the Complete Gospel.* Early Christianity in Context. London: T&T Clark International, 2006.
- Dittenberger, Wilhelm, ed. *Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae.* Leipzig: Hirzel, 1905.
- Duling, Dennis C., Josephine Massyngbaerde Ford, K. C. Hanson, Bruce J. Malina, Mark McVann, Jerome H. Neyrey, Douglas E. Oakman, Carolyn Osiek, John J. Pilch, et al. *Handbook of Biblical Social Values.* Edited by John J. Pilch and Bruce J. Malina. 3rd ed. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2016.
- Dunn, James D. G. “Echoes of Intra-Jewish Polemic in Paul’s Letter to the Galatians.” *JBL* 112.3 (1993): 459–77.
- . *Jesus, Paul, and the Law.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990.
- . “Jesus and Purity: An Ongoing Debate.” *New Testam. Stud.* 48.4 (2002): 449–67. [http://www.journals.cambridge.org/abstract\\_S0028688502000279](http://www.journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0028688502000279).
- . *The Theology of Paul the Apostle.* Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998.
- Eckhardt, Benedikt, David Goodblatt, Arie van der Kooij, Jodi Magness, Hannah K. Harrington, Adam Kolman Marshak, Linda-Marie Günther, Julia Wilker, Clemens Leonhard, et al. *Jewish Identity and Politics between the Maccabees and Bar Kokhba: Groups, Normativity, and Rituals.* Edited by Benedikt Eckhardt. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Edwards, James R. “Markan Sandwiches: The Significance of Interpolations in Markan Narratives.” *Novum Testam.* 31.3 (1989): 193–216.
- Evans, Craig A. “Mark’s Incipit and the Priene Calendar Inscription: From Jewish Gospel to Greco-Roman Gospel.” *J. Greco-Roman Christ. Jud.* 1 (2000): 67–81.

- . *Mark 8:27-16:20*. Word Biblical Commentary. Nashville: Word Books, 2001.
- Fisher, Walter R. "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument." *Commun. Monogr.* 51 (1984): 1–22.
- . "The Narrative Paradigm: An Elaboration." *Commun. Monogr.* 52.4 (1985): 347–67.
- . "The Narrative Paradigm: In the Beginning." *J. Commun.* 35.4 (1985).
- Fleddermann, Harry T. *Mark and Q: A Study of the Overlap Texts*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1995.
- Funk, Robert W., Roy W. Hoover, and (The Jesus Seminar), eds. *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1997.
- Georgi, Dieter. *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1986.
- Grabbe, Lester L. *An Introduction to Second Temple Judaism: History and Religion of the Jews in the Time of Nehemiah, the Maccabees, Hillel, and Jesus*. London: T&T Clark International, 2010.
- Gradel, Ittai. *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002.
- Graffy, Adrian. *A Prophet Confronts His People: The Disputation Speech in the Prophets*. Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1984.
- Grene, Clement. "Cowardice, Betrayal and Discipleship: Peter and Judas in the Gospels." University of Edinburgh, 2016.
- Guelich, Robert A. *Mark 1-8:26*. Word Biblical Commentary. Waco: Word Books, 1989.
- Hiestermann, Heinz Arnold. "Paul's Use of the Synoptic Jesus Tradition." University of Pretoria, 2016.
- Homer. *The Odyssey*. Translated by E. V. Rieu. London: Penguin Books, 2003.
- Horman, John. *A Common Written Greek Source for Mark and Thomas*. Waterloo, Ont: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2011.
- Horsley, Richard A. *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001.
- . "The Sicarii: Ancient Jewish 'Terrorists.'" *JR* 59.4 (1979): 435–58.
- Horsley, Richard A., Allen Dwight Callahan, William R. Herzog II, Warren Carter, Neil Elliott, Erik M. Heen, Cynthia Briggs Kittredge, Susan M. Elliott, and Gerald West. *Hidden Transcripts and the Arts of Resistance: Applying the Work of James C. Scott*

- to Jesus and Paul*. Edited by Richard A. Horsley. SemeiaSt. Leiden: Brill, 2004.
- Howell, Justin R. "The Pharisees and Figured Speech in Luke-Acts." PhD diss., The University of Chicago, 2016.
- Huzar, Eleanor Goltz. *Mark Antony: A Biography*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978.
- Incigneri, Brian J. *The Gospel to the Romans: The Setting and Rhetoric of Mark's Gospel*. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
- Jackson, Howard M. "Why the Youth Shed His Cloak and Fled Naked: The Meaning and Purpose of Mark 14:51-52." *JBL* 116.2 (1997): 273–89.
- Jewett, Robert. *Romans: A Commentary*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.
- Josephus, Flavius. *The War of the Jews*. Translated by William Whiston. Digireads.com Publishing, 2010.
- Kennedy, George A. *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 1984.
- Kim, Jung Hoon. *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus*. London: T&T Clark International, 2004.
- Klauck, Hans-Josef. *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions*. Translated by Brian McNeil. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000.
- Koester, Helmut. *Introduction to the New Testament: History, Culture, and Religion of the Hellenistic Age*. 2nd ed. Vol. 1. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1995.
- Kohler, Kaufmann. "EBIONITES." *The Jewish Encyclopedia*.
- Liddell, Henry G., and Robert Scott. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. Edited by Henry Stuart Jones. 9th ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
- Longenecker, Richard N. *Galatians*. Word Biblical Commentary. Nashville: Word Books, 1990.
- Lund, Nils Wilhelm. *Chiasmus in the New Testament: A Study in Formgeschichte*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1942.
- Luomanen, Petri. *Recovering Jewish-Christian Sects and Gospels*. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Luomanen, Petri, Ilkka Pyysiäinen, István Czachesz, Kimmo Ketola, Risto Uro, Hugo Lundhaug, Vernon K. Robbins, Philip F. Esler, Raimo Hakola, et al. *Explaining Christian Origins and Early Judaism: Contribution from Cognitive and Social Judaism*. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2007.

- MacDonald, Dennis R. *Two Shipwrecked Gospels: The Logoi of Jesus and Papias's Exposition of Logia about the Lord*. Early Christianity and Its Literature. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012.
- MacGregor, Kirk R. "1 Corinthians 14:33b-38 as a Pauline Quotation-Refutation Device." *Priscilla Pap.* 32.1 (2018): 23–27.
- Mack, Burton L. *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993.
- Malamat, A., H. Tadmor, M. Stern, S. Safrai, H. H. Ben-Sasson, and S. Ettinger. *A History of the Jewish People*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976.
- Malick, David E. "Simon's Mother-in-Law as a Minor Character in the Gospel of Mark: A Narrative Analysis." *Priscilla Pap.* 31.2 (2017): 4–9.
- Mason, Steve, Martin Pickup, Amy-Jill Levine, Raimo Hakola, Adele Reinhartz, Bruce Chilton, Jacob Neusner, James ZC. Vanderkam, James F. Strange, et al. *In Quest of the Historical Pharisees*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2007.
- Matera, Frank J. "The Incomprehension of the Disciples and Peter's Confession (Mark 6,14-8,30)." *Biblica* 70.2 (1989): 153–72.
- Miller, Geoffrey David. "Attitudes toward Dogs in Ancient Israel: A Reassessment." *JSOT* 32.4 (2008): 487–500.
- Morrison, James V. "Homeric Darkness: Pattern and Manipulation of Death Scenes in the 'Iliad.'" *Hermes (Wiesb)*. 127.2 (1999): 129–44.
- Nelligan, Thomas P. *The Quest for Mark's Sources: An Exploration of the Case for Mark's Use of First Corinthians*. Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2015.
- Netzer, Ehud. *Architecture of Herod, the Great Builder*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.
- Neusner, Jacob. *From Politics to Piety: The Emergence of Pharisaic Judaism*. 2nd ed. Eugene: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2003.
- . "Mr. Sanders's Pharisees and Mine." *Bull. Biblic. Res.* 2 (1992): 143–169.
- Oppenheimer, Aharon. *The 'Am Ha-Aretz: A Study in the Social History of the Jewish People in the Hellenistic-Roman Period*. Translated by I. H. Levine. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977.
- Pamphili, Eusebius. *Ecclesiastical History: Books 1-5*. Translated by Roy J. Deferrari. The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953.



- Perrin, Norman. *What Is Redaction Criticism?* Eugene: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2002.
- Philo. *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged*. Translated by Charles Duke Yonge. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993.
- Plato. *Plato: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*. Translated by Harold North Fowler. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005.
- Plutarch. *Plutarch's Lives. The Translation Called Dryden's*. Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1906. <https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/1775>.
- Pokorný, Petr. *A Commentary on the Gospel of Thomas: From Interpretations to the Interpreted*. New York: T&T Clark International, 2009.
- Porter, Stanley E. *The Criteria for Authenticity in Historical-Jesus Research: Previous Discussion and New Proposals*. Journal of the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 191. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.
- Powell, James M. "The Confusing and Ambiguous Legacy of Leopold von Ranke." *Syracuse Sch.* 9.1 (n.d.): Article 2.
- Quintilian. *Institutio Oratoria: Books I-III*. Translated by H. E. Butler. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1920.
- Riley, Gregory J. "Influence of Thomas Christianity on Luke 12:14 and 5:39." *Harv. Theol. Rev.* 88.2 (1995): 229–35.
- . "Jesus the Teacher," 2012.
- . *Resurrection Reconsidered: Thomas and John in Controversy*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.
- Roberts, Alexander, and James Donaldson, eds. *Ante-Nicene Fathers: The Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325. Volume 1: The Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus*. New York: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885.
- Roberts, Alexander, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxes, eds. *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. Translated by Frederick Crombie. Vol. 4. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885.
- Robinson, James M., ed. *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*. 3rd ed. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1990.
- Robinson, James M., John S. Kloppenborg, and Paul Hoffmann, eds. *The Sayings Gospel of Q in Greek and English with Parallels from the Gospels of Mark and Thomas*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002.
- Sacchi, Paolo. *The History of the Second Temple Period*. London: T&T Clark

- International, 2004.
- Sanders, E. P. *Jesus and Judaism*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985.
- . *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977.
- Schwartz, Joshua. “Dogs in Jewish Society in the Second Temple Period and in the Time of the Mishnah and Talmud.” *JJS* 55.2 (2004): 246–76.
- Scott, James C. *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.
- Scott, M. Philip. “Chiastic Structure: A Key to Interpretation of Mark’s Gospel.” *BTB* 15.1 (1985): 17–26.
- Scroggs, Robin, and Kent I. Groff. “Baptism in Mark: Dying and Rising with Christ.” *JBL* 92.4 (2018): 531–48.
- Skoven, Anne Vig, Joel Marcus, Heike Omerzu, Gerd Theissen, Eve-Marie Becker, Mogens Müller, Oda Wischmeyer, Jan Dochhorn, Kasper Bro Larsen, et al. *Mark and Paul: Comparative Essays Part II. For and Against Pauline Influence on Mark*. Edited by Eve-Marie Becker, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, and Mogens Müller. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2014.
- Smalley, Stephen. *1, 2, 3 John*. Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word Books, 1984.
- Stanford, Peter. *Judas: The Most Hated Name in History*. Berkeley: Counterpoint, 2015.
- Stettler, Christian. “Purity of Heart in Jesus’ Teaching: Mark 7:14-23 Par. as an Expression of Jesus’ Basileia Ethics.” *JTS* 55.2 (2004): 467–502.
- Stock, Augustine. “Chiastic Awareness and Education in Antiquity.” *BTB* 14.1 (1984): 23–27.
- Strecker, Georg. *The Johannine Letters: A Commentary on 1, 2, and 3 John*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1996.
- Strong, James. *Strong’s Expanded Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009.
- Su, Shih-chieh (Jay). “Modern Nationalism and the Making of a Professional Historian: The Life and Work of Leopold von Ranke.” Brown University, 2012.
- Tacitus. *Annals 13-16*. Translated by Clifford H. Moore. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937.
- Taylor, Joan E. “The Name ‘Iskariot’ (Iscaiot).” *JBL* 129.2 (2010): 367–83.
- Taylor, Lily Ross. “The Election of the Pontifex Maximus in the Late Republic.” *Class.*

- Philol.* 37.4 (1942): 421–24.
- Vawter, Bruce, C.M. “The Johannine Epistles.” *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*. Edited by Raymond Edward Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland Edmund Murphy. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1968.
- Vermes, Geza, trans. *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*. Revised. London: Penguin Books, 2004.
- Wardle, Timothy. “Mark, the Jerusalem Temple and Jewish Sectarianism: Why Geographical Proximity Matters in Determining the Provenance of Mark.” *New Testam. Stud.* 62.1 (2016): 60–78.
- Weeden, Theodore J. *Mark: Traditions in Conflict*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971.
- Welch, John W. *Chiasmus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis*. Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1981.
- . “Criteria for Identifying and Evaluating the Presence of Chiasmus.” *J. B. Mormon Stud.* 4.2 (1995): 1–14.
- William, Smith, W. C. F. Anderson, J. I. Beare, and A. H. Cooke. *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*. Edited by Smith William. London: John Murray, 1875.
- Williams, Frank, trans. *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis: Book I (Sects 1-46)*. 2nd ed. Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies. Leiden: Brill, 2009.
- Williams, Joel F. *Other Followers of Jesus: Minor Characters as Major Figures in Mark’s Gospel*. Journal of the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 102. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994.
- Wink, Walter. *Just Jesus: My Struggle to Become Human*. New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2014. Kindle.
- Winn, Adam. *The Purpose of Mark’s Gospel: An Early Christian Response to Roman Imperial Propaganda*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008.
- Wischmeyer, Johannes, Michael P. Theophilos, David C. Sim, Nina Irrgang, Jesper Svartvik, Florian Wilk, Elizabeth V. Dowling, Michael Theobald, Udo Schnelle, et al. *Paul and Mark: Comparative Essays Part I. Two Authors at the Beginnings of Christianity*. Edited by Oda Wischmeyer, David C. Sim, and Ian J. Elmer. Göttingen Oakville, Conn: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2014.
- Wong, Eric Kun Chun. *Evangelien Im Dialog Mit Paulus: Eine Intertextuelle Studie Zu Den Synoptikern*. Göttingen Oakville, Conn: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012.
- Yelland, Hedley Lowry, S. C. Jones, and K. S. W. Easton. *A Handbook of Literary Terms*. Boston: The Writer, 1980.

Yeung, Maureen W. *Faith in Jesus and Paul: A Comparison with Special Reference to "Faith That Can Remove Mountains" and "Your Faith Has Healed/Saved You."* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002.

Young, David M., and Michael Strickland. *The Rhetoric of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark.* Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2017.